

GERMAN POLICY BEFORE THE WAR

THE WAR

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LONDON :
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.
1916

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PREFATORY NOTE

THE following pages are somewhat expanded, especially in the latter part, from notes of a lecture given before the Royal Historical Society in January last year. The main thesis which I endeavoured then to put before my audience, namely that the establishment of German influence in the Balkans and in the Turkish Empire is the fundamental object of German policy, appears to me to have received corroboration from recent events in South-Eastern Europe. These events are not to be regarded, as some have regarded them, as "afterthoughts," or as the desperate efforts of a Power thwarted in other directions; on the contrary they are incidents in the execution of a plan conceived long ago, to which the crushing, or—if that proved impossible—the maiming, of France and Russia was but the necessary preliminary step.

I desire to express my gratitude to Mr. Lucien Wolf for valuable assistance given me in regard to the last three chapters.

G. W. P.

March, 1916.

CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
I. THE PHILOSOPHY OF MILITARISM—	
Definition—State and Army—Philosophical Basis —Kant and Goethe—Fichte, Hegel, Treitschke— Schopenhauer, Gobineau, Nietzsche—Summary ..	I
II. CIRCUMSTANCES AND CONDITIONS, AIMS AND TENDENCIES, OF MODERN GERMANY—	
Geographical Position—Military History—Economic Expansion—Self-confidence—Materialism—Delusions— Colonies and Colonization—Economic Requirements— Colonial Movement—Treaties and Customs-Unions— Central European Union—Socialism—Trade Methods —The Navy—The <i>Drang nach Osten</i> —Austria-Hun- gary and Turkey—Control of the Near-East—Summary	16
III. FOREIGN POLICY OF BISMARCK, 1871-1890—	
German Anxieties—Germany and her Allies—Peace of Bismarck— <i>Dreikaiserbund</i> —Russo-Turkish War— Austro-German Alliance—Triple Alliance—Success of Bismarck	44
IV. GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY, 1890-1905—	
William II and the Near-East—Franco-Russian Alliance—Anglo-French Rivalry—South African War— The Far-East—Russian Advances—Russo-Japanese War—Eclipse of Russia—Summary	54
V. GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY, 1905-1914—	
Effect of Japanese Victories—Anglo-French Agree- ment—Franco-German Relations—Morocco—France, Italy and Spain—Germany, France and Morocco—Fall	

of Delcassé—Conference of Aigeciras—Casablanca Incident—Franco-German Convention—Anglo-Russian Agreement—The Near-East: Crete—Greece and Rumania—Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro—Turkey and Macedonia—Projects of Reform—Austrian Policy—Aehrenthal and Isvolski—Reval Interview—Turkish Revolution—Annexation of Bosnia—Austria-Hungary and Serbia—Set-back for the Entente—Revolution in Greece—Morocco again—The *Panther* at Agadir—Franco-German Compromise—Tripolitan War—The Balkan League—Attempts at Intervention—First Balkan War: Albania—Conference of London—Treaty of London—Macedonia—Second Balkan War—Treaty of Bucarest—Germany, Austria-Hungary and Serbia—German War Party—Germany's Great Aim .. 66

German Policy before the War

CHAPTER I

THE PHILOSOPHY OF MILITARISM

FEW members of this audience will be unacquainted with the remark of Aristotle, that political disturbances spring from small occasions but from great causes. The remark is essentially true with regard to the struggle in which this country is now engaged. My object to-day is not to discuss the immediate occasions of the War, or the course of the diplomatic negotiations which preceded the outbreak ; nor shall I attempt to apportion the blame for the failure of those negotiations. These questions have been adequately discussed by many capable writers in Great Britain and abroad, and the general conclusion appears to most people no longer doubtful. This ground, therefore, need not be traversed anew. I wish rather to direct your attention to the deeper causes of the conflict : (1) to the ideas and principles, the ambitions and motives, which have produced in Germany a state of mind favourable to war ; (2) to the historical events and the economic and political conditions which have contributed to

colonial expansion, are regarded primarily from the same point of view—that of contribution to the forces of the State—and are more or less subject to the influence of that idea. I am not concerned to criticize this system, or to examine its ulterior effects upon a nation. All I wish to point out is that, when once this apotheosis of the State, and the conception of it as force, have become engrained in the leaders of a people and the bulk of their followers, the rest follows as a logical consequence; and you get a stupendous military machine, not only capable of vigorous defence but irresistibly tending towards aggression.

Such being the outcome of these ideas, we have next to ask to what kind of teaching this peculiar mental condition is due, on what philosophical basis it is built up. I do not pretend to be a metaphysician or to have more than a superficial acquaintance with German philosophy; but this is perhaps of less importance in the present inquiry, for it is not the truth or falsehood of the philosophical theories concerned that is now in question, but the effect they had upon the public mind when filtered through many intermediaries, and largely perverted or distorted in the process. It is not to be supposed that the average educated German, still less the mass of the people, could really follow the arguments of a Kant or a Hegel in regard to that most difficult of sciences, metaphysics; but the German mind has a peculiar aptitude for grasping and being influenced by general ideas, and also for selecting from the whole body of a great man's teaching, *e.g.*, from that of Darwin, just those portions which appeal to

its emotions or suit its circumstances, and neglecting the reservations or modifications which are necessary to a full understanding of his theory. And it is only this national effect, this popular assimilation of the philosophical theories, with which we are now concerned.

The system of political thought and organization which may be summarized as Militarism seems to have a double origin. It is traceable to the two greatest names in German literature—Kant and Goethe. The trains of thought started by these great men developed separately for a long time, until at length, metamorphosed almost out of recognition, and taking in many extraneous elements by the way, they became capable of fusion in the political theory that now holds the field. The two roots from which this theory sprang are the doctrine of Duty taught by Kant, and the doctrine of Self-culture not only taught but practised by Goethe. Strange that from so noble an origin should spring a body of principles which are a danger to the progress of man and the civilization of the world!

Kant taught the transcendent duty of submission to the moral law; but law and liberty were for him brought into harmony by reason. The submission to the moral law must be a willing and deliberate submission; that is, the will and the reason must jointly enter into it; the free will, actuated by reason, must consciously submit. The act of submission, to be of any value, must be pure of selfish or material considerations; it must freely recognize the absolute validity of the moral law. Once recognized, the duty of obeying it becomes a "categorical

imperative"; an attitude of respect and awe is alone permissible in the face of it. Religion is the feeling that springs from the recognition of moral duty as the commandment of God. Wordsworth's "Ode to Duty," whether actually influenced by Kant or not, puts forward a similar ideal. Let us recall his noble lines:

Stern lawgiver ! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace ;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon they face . . .
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong,
And the most ancient heavens through thee are
fresh and strong.

This transcendent idea of duty is the one dominant outcome of Kant's ethical teaching in the German mind. But there are two kinds of duty, private and public: the duty of man to man, the duty of the citizen to the State. It was a great national episode—the Wars of Liberation—which gave a special turn to the general idea, and laid special emphasis and sanction on, the duty to the State. Between 1806 and 1815 the State took up a more and more dominant position in the mental horizon of Germany, and especially of Prussia. To the State the Prussian had always looked for aid and direction; to it now more than ever he owed salvation and protection. In such times, when the nation nerves itself to throw off a foreign yoke, and triumphs, it is natural that civic duty should take on a peculiar sanctity.

This tendency was strongly aided by the teaching of Richte, who enforced the idea of civic duty and

self-sacrifice in his Addresses to the German People. For Fichte, as for Hobbes and Locke, the State is the outcome of contract; but Fichte follows Hobbes rather than Locke in his deductions from the theory. Here you have the dividing line between the absolutist doctrine prevalent in Germany, and the liberal tendencies which have governed our political development since the Revolution of 1688. Locke regarded the contract as one equally binding on both parties—sovereign and people—with the consequence that, if the sovereign fails to act according to it, the people is released from its obligations. Hobbes regarded it as an abdication, on the part of the people, of powers which could not be resumed. The sovereign becomes, through the voluntary cession of unlimited authority, a Leviathan, thenceforward irremovable and irresistible. So, with Fichte, the State embodies the popular will; and the commands of its executive must be obeyed. The form of the State is comparatively a matter of indifference; “every political constitution,” he says, “is legitimate, provided it does not bar progress.” As the definition of progress must be left to the State, the proviso is no bar to absolutism. In his Addresses Fichte insists that rights and duties are combined in the State; from the State the citizen derives what rights he enjoys; from it he learns what duties he has to perform. Nay, further, the State becomes his religion; his individuality is sunk in it; its future is his future. In Fichte, too, the new theory of Nationality found an eloquent and whole-hearted supporter. The State is the Nation in its active shape; in and through the State the

Nation is preserved. "The individual," says Treitschke, "sees in his country the realization of his earthly immortality."

To this theory Arndt and Körner gave poetical expression in their impassioned prose and verse; they inflamed the moral sense of patriotic duty with the emotion of self-sacrifice to a high and noble aim. But the philosophical basis was supplied or at least largely developed by Hegel, the real founder of the German theory of the State. In his *Philosophy of Law* the State appears as the outcome of spirit, "the world which the spirit has made for itself," the highest embodiment of conscious reason. It is not only the unity in which all minor forms of social organization—legal, economic, educational, etc.—combine and are perfected; it is also that in which all individual aims harmoniously join. Patriotism in the conviction "that my particular interest is contained and secured in the interest and end of the State." Thus Hegel went beyond Fichte in his elevation of the State to something almost divine. He differed too in refusing to regard the form of the State as unimportant; for him, organic civil unity could only find adequate expression in a monarchy; there must be some one human being to embody and personate the State. Hegel had lived through the French Revolution; and Kant's Republic of the Nations was for him a dangerous dream. The Kingdom of Prussia under Frederick the Great, with his high notion of duty and his conception of personal monarchy, was a close approximation to Hegel's ideal.

Now it is in the army that the State is most

visibly embodied for the multitude. Universal military service makes every able-bodied man an active participator in the State; it brings home to everyone the notion of civic duty and self-sacrifice in the most concrete and tangible form. The general theory of duty, so strongly inculcated by Kant, at once gives force to, and becomes concentrated in, the duty of soldierly obedience and discipline. And here it is that the great work of Clausewitz on war becomes important from the civic point of view. Clausewitz not only insisted on the duty of every citizen to serve in the army, and on war as the *ultima ratio* of State policy, but he made its principles intelligible to all. Intelligence was called in to aid the moral sense, to show how the paramount duty of service to the State could best be discharged.

From these forerunners it is but a short step to Treitschke, the great historian, who is the outcome of Hegel on one side, and on the other of the historical facts, the victorious wars, which he had witnessed. Hegel repudiated the idea that the State rests on force; Treitschke, with these facts before him, embraced it. In his *Politik* he combines, more clearly and completely than any other, the theory of the State as a semi-divine entity, with the theory that it is based on Force; from which it follows that the army is its highest manifestation, and war its primary business. "War," he says, "is statecraft *par excellence*. Only in war does a people really become a people. War is a radical medicine for the ills of State."¹ And again: "The living God will take good care that war, as a stern medicine

¹ *Politik*, i, 60.

for humanity, shall constantly recur. ". . . Wars cannot cease ; they cannot and should not, so long as the State is sovereign among sovereign States."¹ These views, finally, are embodied, still more crudely, in Bernhardt, for whom war is the climax of civilization, and in a host of other German pamphleteers. Might is recognized as Right ; and Schiller's famous line, " Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht," is taken to mean that the verdict of History—in other words, success—determines what is just. Thus has Kant's " categorical imperative " been perverted, by passing through a series of refracting media, into the duty of serving in the army and of making war.

This, then, is one of the main lines which German thought has followed. But there is another. The second current which has gone to form the present theory of politics is traceable, I think, to Goethe, with his idea of self-culture, a sort of sublimated selfishness, elevated also to the sphere of duty. It is, however, an idea of duty very different from that of Kant or Fichte—the duty of the individual to himself. For Goethe the State hardly existed, except as a convenient machine for social administration. He had little patriotism ; he turned a deaf ear to the call of the State in the hour of danger. He cared naught for Germany, despised Prussia, and admired Napoleon, if he did not, like Heine, go so far as to adore him. Goethe's ideal is not self-abnegation or surrender to the moral law as with Kant, still less self-sacrifice to, or fusion in, the State, as with Fichte. It is self-cultivation,

¹ *Ib.*, i, 76, 77.

self-elevation, not by mere enjoyment, but by self-discipline and *Entbehrung*. There is nobility too in this aim—for the noble-minded man, the great man; but it is tainted, for the ordinary man, by the emphasis laid on self.

This tendency is carried still further by Schopenhauer, who elevated the Will—in which self and self-consciousness are most clearly visible—to the rank of a fundamental principle. The world, for him, is "Will and Idea"; the Will is the ultimate fact, inseparable from self, that by which man becomes self-conscious, by which he really lives. As for the State and all that according to Hegel (his *bête noire*) it involves, he would not hear of it. We are a long way, it appears, from the line of thought which culminates in Treitschke and Bernhardi. Yet we shall presently see them combine.

It was from the ideal of self-culture and the dominance of will-power, combined with Darwin's theory of the Struggle for Life and the Survival of the Fittest—that Nietzsche's notion of the Superman was evolved. Schopenhauer cursed the Will to Live, as uselessly prolonging our misery; but Schopenhauer was a pessimist. The force of Will might be put to other uses than self-annihilation; it was reserved for Nietzsche to discover them. There is much else in Nietzsche besides the Superman—for instance, much scorn poured on Germany, and especially on Prussia; but, after all, the ideal of the Superman is the fertilizing germ in his teaching. The Superman is the highly endowed individual, the born superior person, who by diligent self-culture and self-denial in minor things raises himself to a position

of predominance above his fellows. The hero-worship practised by Heine and extolled by Carlyle finds in him its object. By virtue of this superiority he acquires not only the power but the right to govern. He is in a constant state of war—first, with his weaker self, then with his weaker neighbours. Nietzsche's feeling about war is shown by such sayings as "It is said that a good cause justifies war; but I say unto you that a good war justifies any cause." So Frederick the Great had said, "I take first; it is for the professors afterwards to find the justification." And again: "My brethren in war, I love you from the very heart. Your enemy shall ye seek, your war shall ye wage, and for the sake of your thoughts. Ye shall love peace as a means to new wars, and the short peace more than the long. To the good warrior soundeth 'Thou shalt' pleasanter than 'I will.' So live your life of obedience and of war. What mattereth a long life?" Obedience and War!—it is Prussian militarism in three words. Darwin, who recognized the moral law as profoundly modifying the original struggle for life (Schopenhauer's Will to Live), is accepted only as laying down the law of nature (Hobbes' *homo homini lupus*), still universally valid. It is a return to nature, or rather a recognition of its eternal law, that is preached. In his *Antichrist* Nietzsche execrated Christianity as opposing this return. Might is Right; the strong man can, and therefore may and should, rule as he likes. And his method is not persuasion, or of what use is his strength? It is force and war.

We come at last to the point at which the two

currents of thought which we have traced are fused in one. If the strong man may and should rule, so may a strong combination of individuals, in other words the strong State. Did not Nietzsche himself make the step, when he divided the world into ruling and servile races? And which is to be the strong and therefore dominant State? To the German the answer is obvious. But it was not always so. Fichte indeed had told his hearers that it was "they, among all modern peoples, to whom the germ of human perfection in a special sense is entrusted, and on whom the lead in its development is conferred." But few Germans, before the days of Bismarck, were convinced of this. A strong impulse was, however, given by the fantastic but attractive theories of the Frenchman, Count Gobineau, who, writing in the forties of last century, indicated, in his essay on "The Inequality of Races," the Teutonic race as the race of the future. By the Teutonic race Gobineau meant a good deal more than the German people; but it was easy for Germans to convince themselves, however wrong the view may be, that they alone had kept pure the Teutonic breed. He hated and despised democracy, fatal, in his view, to the retention of racial superiority. The theory stimulated national pride, and was admirably calculated to support the military-absolutist system to which, for more practical reasons, the Germans were inclined.

Gobineau's book, hardly noticed elsewhere, germinated slowly in the German brain. His *Rassen-theorie* was studied; a *Gobineaugesellschaft* was founded; and the astonishing successes of the

period 1864-71 brought it general credence in Germany. It was developed to an absurdity by such writers as Woltmann, who claimed Dante, Lionardo and many other great men of the past as Germans ; and with more plausibility and a great show of learning by H. S. Chamberlain. The theory has now obtained universal acceptance across the Rhine. The Kaiser himself has declared his people to be "the salt of the earth" ; and a host of minor persons, professors and pamphleteers, have preached it consistently, before and still more blatantly since the War. In Germany the Germans are honestly believed to be the chosen people, and Germany the Super-State, destined to rule the world and deserving its predominance.

Here, then, the two currents of thought flow together into a mighty stream. Obedience to the moral law, in other words duty, is incumbent on all. The primary and fundamental duty is duty to the State. The State is force ; its essential embodiment is the army, its primary business war. Self-culture is also a duty ; the Will is power ; like the Superman, the State which has *Kultur* (i.e., organization) and Will becomes the Super-State. This is what the German State has become. It is within its power, therefore it is its right and its duty, to rule the world. But, this dominance cannot be obtained except by force of arms. It is therefore incumbent on every German to support it in this attempt ; and the end is so great and good that it justifies all means. .

Such is the theory ; and we must remember that in Germany theories are apt to be put into practice. That „*Schwärmerei*” which is so characteristic of the

German mind is easily transferred to politics ; the dream of universal dominion has seized upon a whole nation. "Reflection," said Mme. de Staël, "calms other peoples ; it inflames the German." And so the German mind has been prepared for war.

CHAPTER II

CIRCUMSTANCES AND CONDITIONS, AIMS AND TENDENCIES, OF MODERN GERMANY

WE have next to consider the events, the circumstances and conditions, which contributed to strengthen this peculiar state of mind, and led Prussia first, and afterwards the rest of Germany, to give it practical expression.

First, look at the geographical position of Prussia and of Germany. In early days, under the Great Elector, Prussia was a little State in a vast plain, with no natural frontier at all, except where parts of her dominions touched the sea. Expanded as she was by Frederick the Great, the Prussian State was a straggling, ill-compacted domain, its western lands cut off from the main body, exposed to attack all round. The Government was forced to be, as Frederick expressed it, "*toujours en vedette*" —always ready, always on the watch. Moreover, as I need hardly remind you, Germany was, until the latter half of the last century, little more than a geographical expression. Torn between the conflicting claims of Prussia and Austria, and open to the intrigues of foreign Powers, Germany was disunited within and indefensible without. It was not till after the successful wars of 1864-71 that Germany

could consider herself in these respects—political unity and military defensibility—comparatively safe. Since then, the Vosges have formed a natural boundary on the south-west ; the neutral States of Holland, Belgium, and Switzerland protect her from attack on the west and south ; the alliance with Austria secures her on the south-east. But on the east she still has no natural limit ; and the Russian frontier is only 180 miles from Berlin. Moreover, her position in the centre of Europe, though it has great strategical advantages, exposes her to simultaneous attack on two fronts. Lastly, her coast was till recently subject to the disadvantage of being cut in two by Denmark—a difficulty not completely obviated by the Kiel Canal ; and, when her ships pass out into the North Sea, there lies England, like a huge breakwater, right across her path to the Atlantic,—a fact which, in case of British hostility, exposes her merchant shipping to peculiar hazard. In such conditions it is not surprising that the military spirit burnt itself into the very heart of the Prussian people, from whom it has spread to the rest of Germany.

Next, what is the teaching of history for the German people ? The history of Prussia for 130 years, from the accession of Frederick the Great to the triumph of Bismarck, is on the one hand a history of successful war, on the other a tale of humiliation illustrating the danger of being unprepared for war. Throughout the whole period, Prussia depended on her army to a degree unparalleled in any other State. France, it is true, in the great days of Louis XIV, made conquests by force of arms. War

created the Empire of Napoleon ; and, for a time, successful war raised the prestige of the Second Empire. The British Empire was also largely the result of war, naval and military, in all parts of the world. But in neither country was war brought home to the people, except in France by the invasions of 1814 and 1815, in so intimate and terrible a form as it constantly was to the inhabitants of Prussia. Modern Prussia was made by Frederick the Great in two great wars, waged largely, it must be remembered, on Prussian soil. The army which his father founded, and which he developed and led to victory, kept up the military prestige of Prussia till the end of the century, and was so dominant a factor in its greatness, that Mirabeau could say with truth " The only industry of Prussia is war." But the obsolescence of Frederick's system and the want of leadership in Prussia nearly proved the country's ruin. In the clash with Napoleon, Prussia was humiliated and reduced to an almost servile condition ; it was the revival of the army on a national basis, and the introduction of universal military service, which raised her from the dust in the Wars of Liberation. But again neglect of military preparation gave a set-back to Prussian ambitions ; and in the surrender at Olmütz (1850), she was forced to yield the hegemony to Austria. Twelve years later it became the first care of Bismarck to reform and strengthen the army ; for this he dared to violate the constitution and, to stake his own political existence. The "man of blood and iron " achieved his aim, and in three successful wars he created the German Empire under Prussian rule.

This achievement fixed an indelible mark not only on the soul of Prussia but on that of Germany. Germany became Prussianized ; the Prussian view of the State, the Prussian military system, were gratefully adopted throughout the land ; and, whatever relics of the old German *Partikularismus* may still be found, they are wholly ineffective. It is non-Prussians, like Treitschke and others, who have given Prussianism a philosophical basis ; and many of its strongest supporters are to be found in the South. Moreover, a whole school of historians, from Dahlmann and Droysen to Sybel and Treitschke, contributed their aid to the Prussianizing process, by teaching and writing German history from the Prussian point of view. The policy of Prussia was praised as a far-sighted national policy from Frederick the Great to William the First. Even Ranke supported the political theory by concentrating attention on the diplomatic relations of States ; and Mommsen aided absolutism by his impassioned panegyric of Cæsar.

The sudden rise of Germany was due to the army ; an overweening belief in the army, an exaggerated conception of military power, was the inevitable result. Thenceforward the army, which had made the Empire, was kept up to retain it. Bismarck, it is true, stood mainly on the defensive for the rest of his political life ; he was satisfied, and he thought the nation should be satisfied, with the triumph he had won. It was now the time for consolidation, not for conquest. In diplomatic intercourse, the army, kept in the highest state of efficiency and readiness, would give sufficient weight

to German demands without going the length of war. On these principles he acted; and, though twice at least he was on the brink of aggression, it cannot be said that, during the last twenty years of his rule, his policy was aggressive. But during the period of peace the nation did not cease to believe in, nor did it neglect, the army; quite the contrary. With the recollection of Jena and Olmütz in their minds, the Germans took care that they should not be found defenceless again. Had this been all, the rest of the world would have had no cause for alarm. But it was not all. The German leaders, at least, came to regard the weapon of defence as an instrument of aggression. The causes which have led to this all-important change have next to be considered.

The economic expansion of Germany during the last half-century, especially during the last quarter of that time, has been nothing short of marvellous. The economic progress of the United States since the Civil War has perhaps been equally rapid, but across the Atlantic the growth of military resources has not kept level with it. Military tendencies are often regarded as antagonistic to commercial and industrial growth, but this is not necessarily the case. It was not so in England under Elizabeth; it was not so when Walpole was driven from office for his pacific policy towards a commercial rival, or when Chatham received the thanks of the City for having made commerce to flourish by war. It has certainly not been the case with Germany during the last fifty years.

The enormous industrial and commercial growth of Germany since 1870 could never have taken place

—in spite of Mr. Norman Angell—without the successful war which united the nation, finally swept away its internal barriers, and conferred upon it that security from invasion, that self-confidence within and that respect from without, which are indispensable to economic expansion on a large scale. What the industrial and commercial expansion of Germany has been you may read in Prince Bülow's book, *Imperial Germany*, or in the works of Mr. W. H. Dawson and others. I am not going to burden you with statistics, but I may remind you that since 1870 the foreign trade of Germany has more than trebled, rising from 300 to 950 millions, while her mercantile shipping has grown in like proportion. In the iron trade Germany has long outstripped Great Britain; in the application of science, especially chemistry, to manufactures she is far ahead. The Industrial Revolution which took place in England in the eighteenth century has been repeated in Germany on a larger scale; she has passed from a mainly agricultural to a mainly industrial country. Her population has risen from 41 to 67 millions; the yearly addition (though the rate of increase is falling) is nearly a million. Emigration has sunk from about 200,000 a year to a negligible quantity. The change has been enormous; the social character of the whole people, and with this its aims and ambitions, have been revolutionized. What, from our particular point of view, are the chief results?

In the first place, the growth of wealth, combined with military power, has inspired great and, within limits, justifiable self-confidence. A hundred, even

me he feared that the growth of commerce and militarism which would result from the victories of 1870 would undermine the old ideals of Culture ; and the prophecy has come true. Nietzsche himself said that "the German Empire would destroy the German mind."

The effects of these new tendencies on the foreign policy of Germany are too obvious to require pointing out. But it may be worth while to call attention to another outcome of this overweening pride. Nothing obscures the judgment so much as vanity and self-conceit. A false appraisalment of oneself is certain to lead to a false opinion of one's neighbours. And this has been notably the case with Germany. . Always somewhat unsympathetic, and therefore unintelligent of others, the Germans have been led by their pride on the one hand, by their desires on the other, into the grossest miscalculations as to the mind of foreign nations, and even as to the political conditions of other countries. Never has it proved more true that the wish is father to the thought. The Germans have been led to believe that France was utterly decadent ; that Russia would collapse at a blow ; that England would never fight, and that, if she did, her Colonies would desert her, India would revolt, and the British Empire would crumble to pieces. } There is no end, in fact, to the delusions and false hopes which have been nourished in the minds of Germans, as a result of this habitual glorification of themselves and depreciation of their neighbours. Their vanity has destroyed their judgment.

So much for the moral effects of commercial and

industrial expansion in Germany. Its political results have been even more important, and bear more directly on our subject—the deeper causes of the War. Among these political results the first to be noticed is the demand for colonies. Colonies, of a sort, Germany has long possessed, but not such as were of great practical value to the country of their origin. I refer to the numerous scattered settlements of German-speaking people which are to be found in neighbouring and even more distant countries—in Hungary, in Poland, in Western and Southern Russia as far as the Caucasus, in the Balkans and in Syria. More than seventy years ago, Friedrich List had advocated the colonization of Hungary and the valley of the lower Danube, and had pointed out that these undeveloped but fertile lands offered excellent prospects to German settlers. But his ideas had to wait for another generation before they were revived in connection with much vaster schemes. Little is known of these outposts of *Deutschum* outside Germany; and even in that country slight attention was paid to them till quite recent times. The later German settlements in South America, especially those in Brazil and Argentina, have attracted more remark, because they seem to offer greater potentialities, even a way of evading the prohibitions of the Monroe Doctrine. Of late the tendency has been to regard all such settlements as possible nuclei from which German influences, economical and political, may radiate; and the remarkable persistency with which, in some cases after many generations, these settlers have preserved their national language, habits, and ideas

26 OVER-POPULATION AND COLONIES

undoubtedly lends support to such views. Moreover, these settlements now fall into their place as parts of that scheme of "peaceful penetration" which has of late been pursued with such success in Holland and Belgium, in Italy, in Northern France, and even in some parts of the British Empire. But, whatever value these colonies might eventually acquire, they were of no great immediate importance. It was something of a very different kind that Germany began, in the latter part of the last century, to require.

German writers on this subject habitually urge the arguments that colonies are needed, firstly, in order that the surplus of the teeming population may not be lost to the Empire by emigration to non-German lands, and, secondly, in order that fresh reservoirs of the raw material used in German factories may be opened up, and new markets for the disposal of German manufactures, with unrestricted rights of entry, may be provided. This became still more important after the adoption (in 1879) of a protectionist policy, with its consequent tendency to over-production. It is true that, of late years, the growth of population has ceased to be a cause of immediate alarm, for the increase of industrial activity has almost entirely absorbed it; there has, indeed, been a considerable immigration. But this, it is argued, can only be a temporary solution; the time will inevitably come, and come soon, when Germany will be over-populated, and the surplus of hands and brains will flow out to strengthen and enrich Germany's competitors, and be lost for ever to *Deutschum*.

The need of reservoirs of raw products and of new markets for German manufactures, under German control, is even more immediate and insistent. The supplies of coal, iron, and other metals in Germany are not inexhaustible ; other countries, with nascent industries, will more and more desire to keep their supplies for themselves ; materials for textile industries (wool and cotton), rubber and many metals, are only to be got on a large scale in countries more or less primitive, agricultural or uncivilized. Moreover, many markets for manufactured goods are already protected by customs barriers which it taxes even German skill and persistency to surmount ; profits are diminished, and even loss incurred, by such processes as "dumping" in order to force closed doors. The prospect that these barriers may be raised still higher alarms the trading community. The McKinley tariff in the United States, the denunciation of the commercial treaty in Canada, raised loud outcries ; while the chances of Tariff Reform in England have been anxiously canvassed by German economists. These dangers and their consequences have been impressed on the public by many writers ; and the necessity of evading or overcoming them furnishes convincing material for the Pan-German League. To these material incentives must be added the vague yearning after world-power which fills so many ambitious German minds, and has driven so many German pens. A great people like the German could not be content with Europe. Germany must become a *Weltmacht* ; and, to be a *Weltmacht*, you must have a colonial empire. Without her oversea dominions and dependencies, Great Britain,

the World-power *'par excellence*, would be nothing at all.

Such were the ideas and motives that animated the Colonial Movement which began in Germany about 1880. Two years later it took shape in the foundation of the German Colonial Society. It was about the same time that the "scramble for Africa" commenced. In 1879 the Belgian occupation of the Congo began, and the Dual Control was established in Egypt. Next year France resumed her activities in West Africa, and in 1881 occupied Tunis. In 1882 Great Britain took control of Egypt and about the same time of Basutoland, while Italy occupied Eritrea. In 1883 the French, who had been pushing into Upper Nigeria, began to occupy Madagascar; and next year we took Bechuanaland and Nyasaland. Bismarck had hitherto turned a deaf ear to all the prayers and warnings of the colonial party. His policy was not colonial expansion, but consolidation; he was reluctant to add the danger of friction abroad to his préoccupations in Europe; Germany had no money to spare for colonial enterprise, and no fleet to protect her colonies if founded. Such were his reasons for abstention. But in 1884 the pressure became too strong for him, and he gave way. After much negotiation with Great Britain, in which it must be said we played a sorry part, Bismarck proclaimed a German protectorate in South-West Africa, and sanctioned the occupation of Togoland and Cameroon. In the same year the Colonial Conference at Berlin announced to the world that Germany was henceforth to take her share of "the white man's burden"—and the

white man's plunder. German colonial expansion had begun.

The era of great colonial companies followed—the German East Africa Company in 1885, the British East Africa Company in 1886, the British South Africa Company in 1889, and many others. The islands of the Southern Pacific attracted German enterprise; and parts of North Guinea, Samoa, and other islands were occupied. In the last decade of the nineteenth century a series of treaties settled many possible causes of friction and determined the boundaries of the various colonies in Africa—Anglo-French conventions in 1890, 1898, and 1899; an Anglo-German convention in 1890, and a secret one in 1898; an Anglo-Portuguese treaty in 1891, and many other minor arrangements. Never before was a whole continent parcelled out with so little trouble. Germany had got her “place in the sun,” though it must be allowed that her acquisitions were small in area and sometimes poor in quality compared with those made in the same period by other Powers, especially France and England. Nor can it be said that her colonial possessions have, so far, added to her strength, or attained the object for which they were acquired; almost all of them have cost more, some very much more, than they have brought in. But there they are—or rather were—a nucleus, at least, which Germany hoped to enlarge in due time, by diplomacy or arms. And the desire for such enlargement has been—as we saw in the negotiations immediately preceding the War—an important element in German policy. Colonies are regarded as essential to a *Weltmacht*; and, if all the most

eligible parts of the earth are already occupied—well, they must be taken from a country with a stationary population, like France, or from a small State, like Belgium, which, being neutralized in Europe, has no right to any foreign possessions at all.

German colonies have proved rather disappointing, but, even if they had been more successful, they would hardly have satisfied German ambitions, or been regarded as sufficient outlets for or feeders of German trade. Commercial and industrial exigencies have prompted other schemes and methods. Commercial treaties, advantageous to Germany, form one of these methods. A notable example is the treaty forced upon Russia during the Russo-Japanese War, which gave valuable rights to German products while laying a heavy duty on Russian corn. The certainty that Russia would not renew this treaty on its expiration in 1916 has been regarded as a minor cause of the War; and the making of similar or much more one-sided treaties with the States to be defeated by Germany is frequently held up by German writers as one of the advantages to be derived from a military triumph.

But commercial treaties are only a minor item in the German programme. The idea of an immense expansion of the existing Customs Union hovers before the eyes of many German writers. We find it at least as far back as the year 1892, in a work by Julius von Eckhardt, entitled *Berlin-Wien-Rom*. A great *Mitteuropäischer Zollverein* is to be formed, embracing Austria, Italy, Switzerland and other small States, which will be either forced to join or economically starved into adhesion. The number

of States so brought under the ægis of Germany varies in other proposals, according to the ambition of the writer ; but it is always so large as to be completely self-supporting, while the economic pressure which it will be able to exert on other States or Leagues will be irresistible. In a remarkable pamphlet published in 1895, *Germania Triumphans*, the ultimate triumph of Germany is foretold as being accomplished in 1915, after a series of gigantic wars ; and these wars are due originally to commercial rivalry alone, and to the attempts of other Powers to stifle German trade by means of tariff leagues. That commercial unity paves the way for political, the history of the *Zollverein* is there to prove ; and these writers make it clear that what they contemplate is a vast combination of States under German hegemony, in other words under Prussian rule, which shall ensure world-wide domination. Whether commercial or political control is the ultimate aim matters little ; the point is that politics and trade are regarded as inseparable, and that successful war is the means by which the double end is to be achieved. When this is accomplished, universal peace will reign, and triumphant *Deutschtum* will regenerate the world. Such are the dreams and such the projects which have occupied many active German brains during the last twenty years or more. But commercial and colonial expansion, going hand in hand, have had other notable results.

One of these is the rapid and menacing growth of Socialism. It is true that the Social-Democratic party is by no means wholly Socialist ; the majority of its members are rather what we should call

Democrats or Radicals ; its immediate aim is not Socialism, but political reform—a radical change in the constitution. This is, however, of no importance in the present connection ; the point is that a large and growing section of the artisan population, and not the artisan only, demands political reforms which would cut at the root of the existing bureaucratic autocracy. The danger has long been obvious ; divergence of opinion on the question how to meet it is said, on good authority, to have been the immediate cause of Bismarck's dismissal in 1890. But of late years it has grown alarmingly ; in 1912 the Social-Democrats numbered 110 in a Reichstag of 357 members. The prospect of domestic revolution has driven rulers into foreign war before now ; and it can hardly be doubted that the spectre of Socialism and the menace of a revolutionary proletariat have contributed to make the great capitalists, the dominant military party, and the Emperor himself, already inclined on other grounds to war, more ready to adopt this solution as an alternative.

Another danger appears also to have arisen from the peculiar methods by which German industry and commerce have been expanded, and from the necessities which these methods impose. These methods and necessities do not seem to have attracted much attention in this country, but have been ably expounded by foreign writers, notably by Prof. Denis and M. Baillod in France, by Prof. Millioud (of Lausanne) in his book *La Caste dominante allemande*, and by others. According to these writers, German industrial and financial expansion has been built up on a vast system of credit. The

result is a huge and growing accumulation of debt. The necessity of securing the capital already involved, and the payment of interest, necessitate a larger output and therefore an increased outlay, the capital for which can only be obtained by an increase of indebtedness. The manufacturers and the financiers who support them are therefore involved in a vicious circle. The magnificent edifice is hollow at the base. Meanwhile they spend profusely; the whole standard of living has risen; the thrift which is so conspicuous in France, and to which the financial soundness of the French nation owes so much, is wanting in Germany. A comparison of German exports and imports tells a similar tale. M. Baillod shows that while, down to about thirty years ago, exports and imports were fairly balanced, since 1887 the excess of imports has gone on growing, till it has reached in thirty years the sum of over 240 millions sterling. In this country, as we know, imports habitually exceed exports; but the difference is covered by the large profits on our carrying trade and the interest on our foreign loans. Neither source of supply exists to any appreciable extent in Germany. In spite, therefore, of the enormous growth of trade, especially overseas trade, Germany is in reality poorer by 240 millions. Thus, in order to secure the progress made and to avoid collapse, the pace has ever to become faster, the output larger—and this in the face of gorged markets, and markets which show a tendency to be more and more closed to foreign goods.

In the presence of these conditions, imagine the difficulties that would arise from the establishment

of a Customs Union between France and Russia, or a Tariff League embracing the British Empire, or a great rise of tariffs in the United States, involving such restrictions as would practically stop the sale of foreign products in those countries. All manufacturing communities would be hard hit, but it is obvious that a community which is already deep in debt would suffer most. Wages would fall; unemployment would increase; the grievances of the Social-Democrats would become more acute; a political revolution might even be the result. This danger has been—if we are to believe the writers referred to—an ever-growing preoccupation of the German authorities. The necessity of fresh and unrestricted markets is vital to their trade, and therefore to the whole political and military system depending thereon. But there is no apparent way of obtaining fresh colonial or other reservoirs and markets, or even making sure of those that exist, except by war or by diplomatic efforts backed by military force, which may easily lead to war. This, it is suggested, is the main argument which has been employed to convince the leading Socialists that war was inevitable. Some explanation is certainly required to account for the readiness with which that party abandoned their former attitude and placed themselves at the disposal of the Government; and the suggestion that they have been influenced by the arguments referred to is at least worth consideration. If the facts stated about the condition of German trade and industry are true, or even approximately true, it is impossible not to see in them a powerful contributory incentive to war.

Two other results of colonial and commercial expansion have still to be noticed—the German fleet and the *Drang nach Osten*. The two objects for which the German fleet was originally formed, or at least those which were adopted to justify its formation, were the defence and extension of oversea colonies, and the protection of oversea commerce. Such colonies were for the most part obtained, as we have seen, in the eighties and nineties of last century; and it was during the same period that foreign trade began to take on such enormous proportions. To both developments the establishment and strengthening of the German fleet were primarily due. Without a fleet, neither colonies nor commerce could be regarded as secure; both would be at the mercy of a stronger naval power. Such were the reasons alleged in the preamble to the first Navy Law. The reasons were good; the need was obvious; the growing wealth of Germany supplied the means to meet it. The ulterior aims that were subsequently disclosed, or not obscurely implied, were not likely to discredit the enterprise in the eyes of a people prepared, as we have seen, for war, and glad to find a new weapon ready to its hand.

The German Navy has been the special creation of the present Emperor. Bismarck had frowned upon such efforts, as he had upon colonization, and for the same reasons. But the Emperor had no sooner got rid of this check on his proclivities than he began (about 1890) to reorganize the Admiralty. In 1897 Admiral Tirpitz was appointed as its head. In 1898 the first Navy Law was promulgated, with a comparatively modest programme. Two years

later, while Great Britain was in the thick of the South African War, the second Navy Law was passed. It doubled the strength of the fleet; but what was even more notable than this increase was the challenge thrown out in the accompanying memorandum, which contained the following passage: "To protect Germany's sea-trade and colonies, in existing circumstances, there is only one means. Germany must have a battle-fleet so strong that, even for the adversary possessing the greatest sea-power, a war against it would involve such dangers as to imperil his position in the world." After this it was impossible to mistake the ulterior object of the German Navy. Other Navy Laws followed, increasing both strength and efficiency, in 1908 and 1912; and in the latter year the German Government refused (when Lord Haldane went to Berlin) to retard its rate of building except on terms which would have left Germany free to pursue a policy of aggression in Europe without fear of British intervention.

The creation of a great navy was welcomed throughout Germany. The Emperor himself led the agitation in its behalf; and phrases like "Our future is on the water" and "Bitter is our need of a strong fleet" rang through the whole Empire. Austria, the ally, was urged to follow suit, and obeyed the call. A host of pamphleteers supported the Imperial efforts; the Navy League (*Flottenverein*), founded in 1898, now embraces over a million of members and associates; books (like that of Troeltsch) were written to show that the German Navy, though smaller than the British, would probably prove superior in fighting qualities—a view

also adopted by Bernhardi ; and it was universally expected to do great things in the coming war. It is easy to see how the Navy, originating in colonial and commercial needs, due therefore primarily to economic growth, must have increased the confidence of the German people, relieved them from certain fears, and thus proved a direct incentive to war.

I come finally to the last outcome of the combination of philosophical ideas with political and economic aims and motives which I have to mention—the *Drang nach Osten*, the pressure to the East. It is also, in some ways, the most important outcome, because most directly and immediately connected with the present war. So far as I am able to judge, it supplies the master-key to German foreign policy. The conquest of the Orient can, I believe, be shown by reference to a long series of German publications and to recent events to be its principal objective, the great aim to which all other aims are more or less subsidiary. It explains much that would otherwise be difficult to understand, more especially the intense interest which Germany takes in the maintenance of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It is also the most idealistic (if I may use the word) of German aims ; it opens up the widest possibilities to the imagination ; and idealistic conceptions have a peculiar fascination for the German mind.

A modern poet has remarked :

If you've 'eard the East a-calling,
You will never 'eed naught else.

It would be an exaggeration to attribute to the

Germans so exclusive a devotion, but there is no doubt that upon them, and especially on their romanticist Emperor, the East has exercised a great and growing attraction. *Realpolitik* scorns the guidance of sentiment ; but this is no reason why it should not turn it to use. The German sentiment for the East is of considerable antiquity. The practical eye of Moltke discerned, in the 'forties of the last century, its potentialities for his nation ; he even conceived a German Principality of Palestine. I have already referred to the views of List, in connection with German colonization of the lands to the east of Germany. In the next generation after the Franco-German War, explorers like Sachau travelled in Asia Minor and Mesopotamia, and pressed upon their countrymen the notion that those regions, once so prosperous and fertile, might be reclaimed for civilization by German labour and German capital. One of the most influential of German publicists, Paul Bötticher, better known under his pen-name, Paul de Lagarde, revived and developed, about 1880, the ideas of List. Writing in the *National-Zeitung*, he says : " How often are we to repeat to our countrymen who emigrate to America, that they can find at their very doors magnificent countries only waiting to be exploited ? " And again : " We must create a Central Europe by conquering for German colonization large spaces to the east of our frontiers." He foresaw that a great war would be necessary for this purpose, and urged his countrymen to prepare for it. A year or two later, Constantin Frantz suggested the establishment of a great Central-European Confederation, extending from

Holland to the Balkan States, and involving the retirement of Russia beyond the Dniester. For this end, he said, "Prussia must be able to wage an offensive war in the grand style." Later writers carried their views still further, so as to include not only Turkey in Europe but the whole Ottoman Empire. Able officials like Dernburg (afterwards Colonial Minister and lately propagandist-in-chief in the United States), clever and learned publicists like Paul Rohrbach, professors like Anton Sprenger and Ernst Hasse, and enthusiasts like Friedrich Naumann, pointed to the Nearer East as the goal of German hopes, the most promising object of German efforts. The Pan-German League adopted the policy with ardour. • •

The attitude of these writers towards Turkey and Austria deserves a moment's attention. Both these States are regarded as of the first importance for the realization of German ambitions; but, whereas it was at first supposed that they were too far gone in the process of disruption to be saved, and that all that Germany could expect was to obtain a large portion of their *disjecta membra*, it is now generally maintained that they can be brought in their entirety within the sphere of German influence. For this purpose the German element in Austria-Hungary must not only be maintained but placed in a position of unquestioned superiority; the "slavizing" of that empire must, at all costs, be prevented. Ardent patriots protested against the *Magyarisirung* of the Germans in Hungary, and deplored the progress of the Czechs in Bohemia. It was proposed that the non-German elements

under Austrian rule should be expropriated, as has recently been attempted in Prussian Poland, and that alien nationalities should be confined, like the Red Indians in North America, to "reserves." "Pure *Deutschtum*," urged Friedrich Lange, must be substituted for *Slaventum*. Austria, in short, must be thoroughly germanized. We recall the old dispute between the *Grossdeutsche* and *Klein-deutsche* parties which raged in the fifties of the last century. The question was then solved by the exclusion of Austria from the new German Empire; Prussia was not yet strong enough to impress itself on the rest of Germany, and on Austria into the bargain. But, now that Germany has been satisfactorily prussianized, the old idea of a *Gross-deutschland*, to include Austria-Hungary, has been revived in another form. So too with Turkey. In 1896 the Pan-German League, in an official publication, spoke of the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire as imminent, and anticipated no objection, on the part of other Powers, to Germany "claiming a portion" of its territories. Now it claims the whole; and the means to this end is a close alliance, with all the advantages which an alliance with Germany implies. Rohrbach (*Der deutsche Gedanke*) discovers, between the nature of the German and that of the Turk, if not a profound relationship of character, certain traces of affinity—a conclusion in which we may readily acquiesce. The Turk, says this writer, is the chief material and moral force of the East. There is, therefore, in his Empire, "a sphere in which the German *Gedanke* may have a great future, not only by way of material coloniza-

tion, but also with a view to political domination and moral influence."

Thus the ground was prepared, the favourable mental attitude produced. The craze for colonization was at its height, as we have seen, in the eighties of last century. A certain disillusionment followed. Colonies in fruitful and habitable portions of the earth were no longer to be had—at least without fighting for them. Here was a wide area, unoccupied or occupied only by wandering tribes or semi-civilized peoples, under the nominal sway of a decadent Power. Here the superfluous population of Germany might be disposed in promising settlements; German capital could be profitably employed in railways and irrigation works, in mining and agriculture; increasing prosperity would provide growing markets for German produce; a country rendered fit for husbandry and possessing untold mineral wealth would supply raw materials for manufacture and food for the toiling millions at home.

To these economical incentives were added the political and other advantages to be drawn from a close connection with Turkey. Financial and economic control over Turkey, European and Asiatic, meant not only the chance of utilizing excellent military material which, under German tuition, could be formed into a first-rate army; it meant also the control of South-Eastern Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean, the command of the Danube from source to mouth, the severance of Russia from the open sea, and an end to the Russian dream of celebrating an Orthodox Mass in Santa Sophia. More than that, the submission of Turkey to German

guidance would mean the practical possession of Bagdad, and a road to the Persian Gulf ; whence it would be easy to bring pressure to bear not only on Persia but on Russian territory east of the Caspian, and even on India. Rohrbach, in his essay on the Bagdad Railway, dwells complacently on the prospect of using the Turkish army as a " spear-head " against the English in Egypt, in case we should oppose German designs elsewhere.

The possibilities, in short, both economic and political, were practically boundless. But, to secure so great a prize, it was indispensable that the Austro-Hungarian Empire should not only be maintained, but should dominate the Balkan Peninsula. The disadvantage of a close alliance with a State so divided in itself, and in so precarious a political condition, as Austria-Hungary, has induced some German publicists to advocate a rupture of the connection ; but this view appears to be very rare. The vast majority of writers regard the connection as essential ; and it is clear that the great scheme could in no other way be carried out. The road from Berlin to Byzantium and thence to Bagdad—" the three B's "—runs through Vienna. Hence the policy which has led to the present war.

Recent incidents will establish more clearly the thesis that the attempt to dominate the East forms the keystone of German *Weltpolitik* ; but it will be more convenient to take these in chronological order and as connected with other matters, in a survey of the events immediately leading up to the present war, to which I next invite your attention. We have seen how the German mind was prepared by philoso-

phical theory, by the experience of the past, and by the teaching of historians, to embrace certain views of the State and of war, which produced a warlike tendency; we have also seen how this tendency was confirmed and strengthened by confidence arising from a great accession of financial and economic resources; how from economic progress a colonial empire and a great fleet arose; how, finally, economic necessities and political ambitions, combined with the teaching of many eloquent writers, familiarized the people with the idea of war as a legitimate means of solving their difficulties and realizing the national aims. We have now to see how the events of the last few years have led up to the actual outbreak, by gradually convincing the German people that their interests demanded the adoption of a method to which they were already, by theory, training, and experience, predisposed.

CHAPTER III

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF BISMARCK, 1871-1890

LOOKING broadly at the events of the last twenty-five years, we perceive certain main lines of German expansionist policy gradually unfolding themselves—a colonial policy, manifested in various parts of the globe, in Africa, Asia, South America, but especially in regard to the question of Morocco; a Near-Eastern policy, which may also be called, in a sense, colonial, displaying itself in the Balkans, in relations with Turkey, and in far-reaching schemes like the Bagdad railway; a military policy, visible in the rapid and continuous growth, after 1898, of the war-fleet, and in frequent additions to the strength of the army, designed to support those schemes. Less obviously, in some departments indeed almost invisibly, a policy of economic expansion is pushed on, by great steamship lines depending largely on Government support, by lavish expenditure on colonial progress, by the peaceful penetration—financial, commercial, and industrial—of neighbouring States, and by many thoughtful measures calculated to improve economic conditions at home, and to allay socialistic discontent. On the other hand, we see signs of growing anxiety on the part of other States, and increasing suspicion of Ger-

many's intentions. A new grouping of the Great Powers is gradually formed, in which the so-called Triple Entente—England, France, and Russia—faces the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy. Thus it was hoped that a “Balance of Power” would be maintained, and European peace preserved. But by Germans the formation of the Entente was stigmatized as *Einkreisungspolitik*—a policy of encirclement, designed to hem in Germany and to prevent her further expansion.

On the side of the Entente Powers—apart from the views of certain chauvinistic sections, which no doubt have existed, more or less, in all three countries—the combination was genuinely defensive; but it is easy to see how it might appear to anxious German minds to be, at least potentially, aggressive. It must be remembered that Germany had causes of friction with each of the three Entente Powers—with France, the incurable sore of Alsace-Lorraine and (latterly) Morocco; with Russia, the question of *Deutschtum* against *Slaventum* and (latterly) the Balkan question; with Great Britain, naval supremacy and commercial rivalry. Should all these questions become acute at the same time, a hostile combination of a very dangerous kind was obviously possible. Moreover, the Triple Alliance had one weak spot, in the craving of Italy for a better strategic frontier and for *Italia irredenta*, and in her rivalry with Austria in the Adriatic. Hence the German fears; and fear is one of the most potent causes of war. If a combined attack were probable or even possible, would it not be better to anticipate it while there was a likelihood of victory? The belief in the existence of a wide-

spread plot against the life of Germany, and the idea of a preventive war to thwart it, took hold of the German mind ; and a war which anticipates attack may be regarded as a defensive war. Such is the reasoning which has been consistently presented to, and universally accepted by, the German people. Such is their defence and justification.

These being the broad facts, apparent on a superficial investigation, let us endeavour to see them in somewhat larger detail, and to trace out, in their chronological development, the phases through which German policy passed during a period of forty years, and the events connected with that policy which led, by a sort of logical sequence, to the present collision.

In concentrating attention on the policy and aims of Germany, I am not unmindful of the fact that Austria-Hungary is an important member of the Germanic firm. The exact share which the statesmen of Vienna and of Pesth have had in determining the policy of the Triple Alliance cannot now, and possibly never will, be defined. But it is clear that the dominant partner throughout, and to an ever-increasing degree in recent years, has been Germany. However prominent Austria-Hungary may have seemed occasionally to be, *e.g.*, in October, 1908, and in July, 1914, no one will deny that the originating mind, the motive force, and (at times) the curbing hand, have all along been in Berlin. Italy, again, though her ambitions and her needs have often been subjects of grave and doubtless anxious consideration for German statesmen, has been still less of a determining element in the Central League ; and,

at all events since the close of the last century, she has tended more and more to go her own way. It is with Germany then that we have, first and last, to reckon ; it is with *her* policy and *her* aims that we are really concerned.

Although Bismarck, in respect of colonial expansion and of contact with Turkey, yielded to some extent, as I have already said, to modern aims and ideas, the character of his government during its later years (1870-1890) is quite different from that of William II which followed. Further, in the reign of the present Emperor, a remarkable change took place about the year 1905, mainly in consequence of the Russo-Japanese War. •A policy hitherto cautious and not obtrusively aggressive gave way in that year to one of ominous activity ; serious crises in international affairs rapidly succeeded one another ; and the menace of war became more and more acute. The dates 1890 and 1905 are thus of primary importance in our survey. I shall deal shortly with the first two periods, and at greater length with the last, as having the most direct bearing on our subject.

In order to realize the change which took place in 1890, let me endeavour to indicate the principles of Bismarck's policy, and the international position in which he left Germany and Europe at the time of his fall. Aggressive and enterprising, even hazardous, as was Bismarck's conduct of affairs during his first nine years of power, his actions during the last nineteen years, from the Peace of Frankfort onward, may be summed up in the words caution and consolidation. The very greatness of his triumph made him

anxious lest a combination of States should seek to deprive him of it. He suffered, as Schouvaloff said, and as he himself confessed, from a perpetual *cauchemar des coalitions*. Russia was already his friend; her support had been invaluable ever since he had won it by his Polish policy in 1863; it was further secured when, in 1871, his assistance enabled her to erase the Black Sea clauses from the Treaty of Paris. But from the two other great Continental Powers—Austria and France—he had to fear a war of revenge. In the case of Austria, which would gladly have aided France in 1870, had she been prepared, the wisdom of his moderation in 1866 was soon made plain. Austria now accepted the *fait accompli*, and recognized her exclusion from Germany; and in 1872 the *Dreikaiserbund* was formed. This league was, in fact, a revival of the old Holy Alliance—a compact, but without any formal document, for the maintenance of peace on the basis of the *status quo*, the suppression of revolutionary efforts, and joint action in Eastern affairs. In 1873 Italy was admitted, by a similar verbal agreement, to partnership with the three Empires in the task of maintaining European peace. France was thus isolated, as after 1815; a war of *revanche*, even had her internal condition allowed it, was made impossible; and Austria was directed to look for compensation for her German and Italian losses in the Balkan Peninsula. But the understanding with Russia was not absolutely secure; and the first rift was made when the Tsar intervened in 1875 to save France from a war of annihilation, threatened by Bismarck on account of the French Army Law and his fears of a royalist

Restoration which would cross his aims in the *Kulturkampf*. Bismarck, it is true, strenuously denied that he had cherished any such intention. But it was universally believed to have existed ; and in any case he was deeply offended with the Russian Chancellor. Three years later he had his revenge.

The Eastern Question, dormant for twenty years, was revived by the insurrection in Herzegovina (1875), due in some measure to a scheme of reform which the three Eastern Powers had presented to the Porte. Serbia subsequently attacked Turkey ; the " Bulgarian atrocities " followed ; and the Tsar was hurried, by an outbreak of national emotion, into a Turkish war. Before he entered upon it, he sought an understanding with Germany as to the probable outcome. Bismarck declining to pledge himself, the Tsar turned to Austria, and, in the secret treaty of Reichstadt (1876), purchased her benevolent neutrality by the promise of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was hoped that Austrian aggrandizement in the western part of the Balkan Peninsula would be more than balanced by Russian gains, direct or indirect, on the eastern side. But the Tsar was doomed to disappointment. The Peace of San Stefano, which brought the Russo-Turkish War to a close, seemed indeed not only to promise a settlement of the Eastern Question, at least for a long time, but also to secure a dominant influence for Russia in the greater part of the Balkan Peninsula. But the Congress of Berlin altered all this. Bosnia and Herzegovina were occupied by Austria ; but the " big Bulgaria " to which Russia looked for compensation was reduced to small dimensions, and

what was left was divided into two separate States. Russia not only lost prestige, but by her unwise and ungrateful policy towards Rumania alienated the affections of that country for thirty years. Turkey recovered a great part of what she had abandoned ; and the seeds of future trouble were sown in the restoration of her sovereignty over Macedonia.

At the Congress of Berlin Bismarck claimed to have played the part of an " honest broker " ; but strict impartiality was not what Russia had expected, and her relations with Germany could not remain on the same friendly footing as before. So deeply was the Tsar annoyed that he even threatened war ; and for a short time relations between Petrograd and Berlin were seriously strained. Bismarck was quick to perceive his chance ; and the Austro-German alliance of 1879 was the result. This treaty, not officially divulged till 1888,¹ pledged each Power to active assistance in case of an attack by Russia on either, and to benevolent neutrality in case of attack by another Power. It has lasted to this day. Bismarck, it is true, did not regard it as a sufficient safeguard ; he had no intention of falling out with his great neighbour, and still longed for security on his eastern front. In 1881 the Tsar, Alexander II, died ; two years later Gortschakoff followed him to the grave. His old rival removed, Bismarck set himself to renew the former connection, and in 1884, at Skiernewice, he entered into a secret agreement—the so-called " reinsurance " treaty—with Russia. It was at a time when his colonial policy, involving

¹Its purport was, however, known ; and it was immediately welcomed by Lord Salisbury as a guarantee of European peace.

possibilities of friction with England, was maturing, and when Russia was not only intent upon ousting Prince Alexander of Battenberg from Bulgaria, but was also contemplating an advance in Central Asia, which two years later nearly brought her into conflict with England over the Penjdeh affair. Both parties had therefore an interest in coming to terms. The treaty, in what are probably Bismarck's own words,¹ arranged "that if either of them [Germany or Russia] were attacked, the other would remain benevolently neutral." Russia, thus protected, was emboldened to go forward in Asia, where, in 1885, she seized Penjdeh, and in the Balkans, where she kidnapped Prince Alexander, and presently made herself mistress of Bulgaria. Germany, on her side, was able to act with more decision in colonial matters. Bismarck now laid hands on South-West Africa, and proclaimed Germany's appearance as a Colonial Power by the Congo Conference at Berlin. Nevertheless, a certain coolness recurred when, in 1887, the Tsar again intervened, on the occasion of the Schnäbele incident, to hinder Bismarck from attacking France; and in 1890, after the Chancellor's fall, his successor, Caprivi, declined to renew the treaty. It was, however, kept a secret till 1896, when Bismarck, taunted with having done nothing to prevent the Franco-Russian alliance, disclosed it. Its non-renewal was then defended on the ground that it was incompatible with the Austrian alliance. Whatever the cause, the fact that the alliance with Austria-Hungary was retained, while the arrangement with Russia was dropped, indicated a

¹ *Hamburger Nachrichten*, October 24th, 1896.

momentous deflection in the policy of Germany, and a departure from Bismarckian lines. It was, indeed, the parting of the ways.

Meanwhile, however, Bismarck had secured another ally. In 1881, France, acting on a suggestion made by Lord Salisbury to M. Waddington during the Congress of Berlin, and on significant hints from the Chancellor, occupied Tunis. This was naturally a cause of deep annoyance to Italy; Rome was again threatened by a new and more dangerous Carthage. Isolated as Italy was, she could expect no compensation; and the menace to her security drove her to join the Austro-German League in the following year. Thus was formed the Triple Alliance, which, renewed on several occasions, remained a governing factor in European politics for over thirty years. Rumania, after 1879—it is still uncertain whether the treaty of 1883 was a formal alliance or not—was virtually another member of the league.

Thus entrenched and fortified by compacts with all his important neighbours, save France, Bismarck could feel safe. Anglo-German relations were friendly; Lord Salisbury was well-inclined; and Bismarck declared in 1885 that the friendship of England was more important to Germany than the future of Egypt. France was on bad terms with Italy, which was still resenting the occupation of Tunis and smarting under the failure of her colonial enterprises. The Egyptian Question, not to mention boundary difficulties in West Africa and other colonial troubles, separated France from Great Britain. The progress of Russia in Central Asia aroused anxieties in England which Lord Salisbury

vainly strove to allay by the advice to study large maps and not to be "mervous." The policy of combination on the one side and separation on the other had admirably succeeded. Germany was growing richer every day ; and there appeared no probability of that "nightmare" coalition which subsequently took place. Such was the condition of prosperity and security in which Bismarck left the German Empire, when in 1890 he resigned the reins of power into the hands of the young and impetuous Emperor. With his departure from the scene the character of the drama changed.

CHAPTER IV.

GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY, 1890-1905

THE amazing activity of the new ruler, and the war-like utterances with which William II began his reign, caused no little fluttering of the doves; but, as years passed by and Germany did not adopt a menacing attitude, international anxiety was somewhat allayed. The Emperor had, however, already shown his hand, if Europe in general failed to perceive his game. The views of Oriental policy which I have already described had begun to sink into the German mind soon after the Franco-German War, but they remained vague and visionary till a much later date. Bismarck, with his caution and strong common sense, would have nothing to say to them. His remark, made so late as 1888, that German interests in the Balkans were not worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier, was typical of his state of mind. As in the matter of the colonies and the fleet, he was reluctant to embark on a policy of adventure; and, no doubt, increasing age strengthened his objections. Nevertheless he was ready to take advantage of opportunities, especially such as enabled him to further the economic progress of Germany, on which his heart was set. For many years

British influence had been predominant in Constantinople. But, when Gladstone came into power in 1880, pledged as he was by his utterances in and before 1878, a different tone was adopted by our Foreign Office, and British influence at the Porte began to wane. Another blow was dealt to it by our occupation of Egypt in 1882. Bismarck seized the opening thus given. He was able to persuade the Sultan that Germany was the true friend of Turkey, and he used the goodwill of the Turkish Government to promote German financial and commercial interests in the Ottoman Empire. Further than this, however, he would not go.

The young Emperor, immediately on his accession, manifested his inclination towards a more active policy. The *Drang nach Osten* began to pass from the visionary phase into the area of practical politics. In 1889 the Emperor paid his first visit to Constantinople, and knit up a personal friendship with the Sultan, Abdul Hamid. German publicists at once grasped the importance of this visit, and extolled their ruler's activity and foresight. Bismarck did not like the journey, still less the views which the Emperor announced on his return; and this divergence was probably one of the reasons which led to the Chancellor's dismissal in 1890. In 1898 the Emperor again visited the Golden Horn, went on to Jerusalem, figured in Eastern costume, and at Damascus proclaimed himself the protector of Turkey and the friend of Mohammedanism throughout the world. We may remember that this announcement closely synchronized with the first German Navy Bill, the Battle of Omdürman, and the episode of

Fashoda, which nearly brought about a war between England and France. Still larger concessions were soon afterwards obtained from the Porte; and the project of the Bagdad Railway, which was to link up Berlin with the Middle East, was launched. The "peaceful penetration" of the Ottoman Empire—the preliminary to its political subjugation—had begun.

Meanwhile important events had happened elsewhere; and of these the gravest, in its effect on the position of Germany, was the formation of the Franco-Russian alliance. The first indication of such a possibility was given, as we have seen, in 1875; twelve years later another warning note was heard. The Tsar's intervention naturally won the gratitude of France; fear of Germany and acute colonial rivalry with England prompted her to approach the Power which alone could check Berlin, and whose progress in the East was a cause of alarm to this country. The rapid recovery of France from the sufferings of 1870 and her great wealth enabled her to offer the financial assistance of which Russia has always been in need. Hitherto Petrograd had drawn chiefly on Berlin; but, after the alienation of 1887, the supply showed a tendency to dry up, just at the time when money was badly wanted for the Trans-Siberian Railway and other expensive schemes. The Paris bankers came to Russia's aid, and by the year 1894 had advanced no less than 160 millions sterling¹

¹ The whole amount advanced by France to Russia, from public and private sources, was estimated in 1914 by Paul Rohrbach (*Der Krieg und die deutsche Politik*), on the basis of French statements, at £800,000,000.

to that country. The ground for an understanding was thus firmly laid ; and certain obstacles to a closer union were gradually removed. The death of the old Emperor William I and his son in 1888 broke the personal tie which had hitherto united the Courts of Berlin and Petrograd. The instability of French governments naturally repelled the Russian autocracy ; but in 1889 the Boulanger incident showed that the Republic was more firmly seated than had hitherto been supposed. When the compact of 1884 was dropped, Russia required support in Europe if she were to prosecute her Far-Eastern policy with good hope of success. France was her natural ally, for both countries were still at odds with Great Britain ; and friction in Siam brought England and France to the verge of war in 1893. The result of all these circumstances was the Franco-Russian alliance. A military convention was signed in 1891 and confirmed in 1894 ; and a year later M. Ribot could publicly speak of Russia as the " ally " of France.

The terms of the alliance have never been divulged, but it appears certain that it was merely a defensive compact. Security in Europe was the primary object in view ; but this security could be, and indeed was, utilized for enterprises far afield. France was encouraged to push forward still more adventurously in Africa. In 1896 the Marchand Mission started from the French Congo for the Upper Nile. Arriving at Fashoda, just before the Battle of Omdurman, Colonel Marchand found himself face to face with a victorious British force. Some little time before, the French Government had sounded the Russian

as to its attitude in case of the collision which was clearly possible, and had received an assurance from Petrograd that Russia would support France.¹ But, when the crisis came, President Faure and M. Delcassé decided, for whatever reason, that Fashoda was not worth a war. They accordingly gave way, and recalled Colonel Marchand. A convention, in which France abandoned her claims on the Egyptian Sudan, was the result ; but a natural feeling of soreness for some time prevailed across the Channel. In West Africa, also, there was for some time serious friction ; but the difficulty was overcome by a judicious compromise, and in 1899 the respective boundaries were defined. Still there remained Egypt ; the fisheries question in Newfoundland was troublesome ; sore spots enough existed in various parts of the globe to relieve Germany of anxiety lest the two ancient rivals should put aside their quarrels and combine to check her ambitions.

Apart from these difficulties with France, Great Britain was occupied, during a large portion of this period, with the troubles in South Africa which culminated in the Boer War. The origin of these troubles, dating from the annexation of the Transvaal in 1877, and intensified by the unfortunate war of 1881, cannot be attributed to German influence. It is none the less true that the future of the Boer Republics began, from that time, to interest German expansionists ; and the possibility of knitting up relations with the farmers of the Transvaal cannot but have occurred to Bismarck when he resolved to

¹ See articles and documents in the *Figaro*, February 18th and 22nd, 1904.

annex South-West Africa.¹ The encouragement which President Krüger received from Berlin had much to do with his resistance to British claims ; and the Emperor's telegram, sent on the morrow of the Jameson "raid," was loudly applauded in Germany. It was the first incident which roused the British public to a sense of German hostility. When the South African War broke out, there is no doubt that the Boers expected active assistance from Germany ; and, if what they had taken to be promises were not redeemed by the formation of a European Coalition in their favour, in the winter of 1899-1900, the reason is perhaps to be found in the secret Anglo-German convention of 1898. This arrangement settled the respective claims of the two countries in case of a liquidation of the Portuguese colonial empire, which was then regarded as imminent, and left everything south of the Zambesi within the sphere of British influence.² In view of this understanding, the German Government could hardly have intervened in the struggle—at least, so long as its issue remained doubtful. It is also not improbable that the self-restraint exercised in Berlin is partly traceable to Mr. Rhodes' visit in March 1899,³ at which some sort of understanding is said to have been reached by the Emperor and his visitor respect-

¹ It was doubtless in view of possible trouble with the Boers that a secret clause was added to the Anglo-Portuguese Boundary Treaty of 1891, enabling Great Britain to send troops through Portuguese territory—a stipulation afterwards utilized in the relief of Mafeking.

² See "The Anglo-German Agreement," *Fortnightly Review*, October, 1898.

³ See *The Life of Cecil Rhodes*, by Sir L. Michel.

that Russia would soon attain at Seoul the same dominant position which she had already won at Peking. Now, Korea is for Japan very much what Belgium is to Great Britain ; and the Russians at Seoul and Masampho would have been as menacing to Japanese security as a German occupation of Brussels and Antwerp would be to this country. Japan made up her mind to fight rather than incur this danger, and found in England the support she required. Hence the Anglo-Japanese alliance of 1902, and the Russo-Japanese War which began two years later.

How far it is true that Germany prompted Russia to the enterprise must remain for the present doubtful ; certain it is that, on consideration of a highly advantageous commercial treaty, the German Government gave the Tsar certain pledges which enabled Russia to denude her western front of troops, in order to transport them to the scene of war in Manchuria. German shipowners were allowed to sell ships to Russia, to be converted into cruisers ; and German financiers provided a loan. If the war was not due to German advice—which indeed would have been superfluous—it was favourable to German interests, and was therefore facilitated by Germany.

This is not the place to discuss the Anglo-Japanese alliance or the war that followed. What I am concerned to point out is the enormous effect which the issue of that war produced in international and especially European politics. No one acquainted with the history of Europe in the nineteenth century can fail to be struck by the dominant position which Russia occupied during almost all that time. Courtied

by Napoleon I, and dividing the Continent with him, it was she who gave his Empire its first deadly blow. After 1815 she led the forces of reaction ; and her policy in the Near East kept the Western Powers in constant alarm. The Crimean War exposed her real weakness ; nevertheless, a few years later she weighed as heavily as ever in the scale of European politics. It was her goodwill that enabled Napoleon III to vanquish Austria and emancipate Italy. Courted by Bismarck, her benevolent neutrality allowed him to overthrow Austria and France, and to create the German Empire ; and, except for one brief interlude, a good understanding with Russia was the keynote of his foreign policy. Even the comparatively unsuccessful war of 1878 only temporarily dimmed her prestige. It recovered more than it had lost through the alliance with France ; and it can hardly be doubted that the fear of a collision with Russia kept the projects of William II, especially his designs in the Near East, within bounds for fifteen years.

But now all this was to be altered. Russia challenged the young Asiatic Power, and was grievously defeated. Nor was this all. The result of the war, combined with lamentable social and political conditions at home, produced internal disorders which, added to the immense losses of men and *matériel* in the Far East, rendered a vigorous foreign policy impossible for a long time to come. In short, Russia was eliminated from international calculations ; it was as if, in the solar system, Saturn had suddenly fallen from heaven. A balancing force had been removed ; the relations of all the other planets were changed. More especially, a constant source of

anxiety for Germany disappeared—at least for a time. The Kaiser's hands were freed.

The most notable features of the period (1890-1904) which we have now passed in brief review are these. For the policy of consolidation at home and restraint abroad, which marked the later years of Bismarck's sway, was substituted a more active and adventurous policy, a policy of expansion, not yet indeed obviously aggressive, but rather preparatory for aggression. Incidents but little noticed at the time, such as the Emperor's visits to the East, the launching of the Bagdad railway, the acquisition of Heligoland, are now seen to mark stages in the execution of a consistent and considered plan. Other events, such as the Krüger telegram and the seizure of Kiaochau, which made more noise, fall into their place in the same scheme. Above all, the creation of a great navy, starting from the Navy Bills of 1898 and 1900, began to attract attention in this country, and roused apprehensions which the events of the subsequent period did nothing to allay. Meanwhile the internal prosperity of Germany advanced by leaps and bounds; and the confidence of the country grew with the increase of its wealth. New ideas, new hopes and ambitions, began to permeate political circles, and inflamed the utterances of a host of writers. The Bismarckian system began to be regarded as obsolete. The great scheme of a Central European Customs Union was launched. The idea of a vast semi-colonial empire or protectorate, extending from the Balkans to the Persian Gulf, took shape. The Pan-German League, with its all-embracing notions of nationality, its far-reaching

schemes of conquest, appealed to the visionary side of the German mind. The Navy League and other similar associations supplied a practical and immediate aim, and strengthened the idea of combined national effort for a great end. It was a period of rapid internal development, both of forces and ideas, during which the foundations were laid for expansion and ultimately for aggression abroad. The nature of this growth was little understood or even observed outside Germany. England, France, Italy, and Russia were all occupied beyond the frontiers of Europe; what was going on in Germany escaped their attention. Nevertheless, especially towards the end of the period, a vague feeling of suspicion and apprehension began to spread. The Bismarckian grouping of the Powers gave way; or rather the Powers outside the central *bloc* tended to substitute coalition for their previous isolation. The Triple Alliance still held firm, but France and Russia drew together, and England and France began to search for a way of composing their mutual jealousies. The Triple Entente was already visible on the horizon. Such was the position when the Russo-Japanese War took place.

CHAPTER V.

GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY, 1905-1914

WE now enter upon another period, one full of "alarums and excursions" which have led on, almost inevitably, to the present war. I am far from asserting that Germany, ten years ago, had conceived the deliberate intention of provoking a European conflict. What I maintain is that the course of action initiated by the German Government in 1905 was one of an increasingly self-assertive, if not actively aggressive, character, calculated to encourage ambitions in the German people and fears in other nations which divided Europe into two armed camps; and that a policy of demands and threats, of diplomacy backed by a constant "rattling of the sabre," was bound eventually to lead Germany into an international position in which diplomatic pressure could no longer ensure a triumph, and war became, for a fully armed and self-confident people, the only alternative. Clausewitz regarded war as the "continuation of policy." That depends on the policy. A policy was now pursued by Germany which was bound, sooner or later, to result in war.

Let us note, at the outset, the dates of certain events in the Far East. The war between Russia

and Japan began in February, 1904. After a long series of sanguinary engagements, Port Arthur fell at the end of the year ; and the remains of the first Russian fleet passed into the hands of the victors. In February and March, 1905, was fought the last great land-battle, that of Mukden ; and in May the second Russian fleet was destroyed in the Battle of Tsushima. President Roosevelt intervened, and the Peace of Portsmouth was signed in September.

I pass over the more remote effects of the Japanese victory, which re-echoed throughout Asia,—the annexation of Korea, the revolution in China, the growth of nationalist feeling and the stimulation of “unrest” in India, the revolution and the grant of a constitution in Persia. In the Near East also the triumph of an Asiatic over a European Power had a perceptible influence, in the growth of the Young Turk movement, which issued in the revolution of 1908, and in the nationalist agitation in Egypt. Even in the Far West, the fear of Japanese aggression began to occupy the mind and to affect the policy of the United States. In short, the victories of Japan, like the ocean-waves engendered by the earthquake of Krakatoa, were felt all round the world. What we are here concerned with is their immediate effect on the European position.

For some time past the Governments of France and Great Britain had felt that the existence of a number of causes of friction between them was detrimental to both countries ; and efforts had been made by well-disposed persons on both sides of the Channel to bring about a better understanding. These efforts, however, had not made much way

before the Russo-Japanese War. At an early stage in the hostilities it became evident that a Russian victory was improbable, and that, at all events, a long and exhausting struggle was in prospect. With Russia fully occupied in the Far East, France practically fell back again into the isolation from which she had escaped in 1891. So long as England was unfriendly, or even indifferent, she was exposed unaided to dangers from across the Rhine such as had threatened her in 1875 and 1887. The situation was too hazardous to be endured. There was only one possible supporter—Great Britain, with whom France had nearly gone to war six years before. But in the interval some causes of trouble had been removed ; and a King was on the English throne who undoubtedly laboured—even if his influence in this respect has been sometimes exaggerated—in the cause of peace. Above all, it was felt in England that, if the situation was to be saved, and the peace of Europe preserved, it could only be by common action on the part of the two western Powers. The result was the Anglo-French agreement of April 1904, which set at rest all outstanding questions between the two countries. France recognized the position of England in Egypt ; England, somewhat vaguely, acknowledged French claims in Morocco ; Madagascar was registered as French ; French and English possessions in Nigeria were finally delimited, rival interests in Siam reconciled, and the ancient disputes about the Newfoundland fisheries brought to a close. There was no further obstacle to concerted action in European affairs.

The stability and value of the agreement were soon

to be tested. In the following year (1905) Germany made the first of several attempts to destroy it. The ground she chose for this effort was the question of Morocco. To understand her action and the events that followed, it will be necessary to go back a few years, and trace briefly the circumstances which brought Moroccan affairs into such prominence. Since the retirement of Bismarck, Franco-German relations had been, if not precisely friendly, on a tolerable footing. Germany had shown dissatisfaction at the Franco-Russian alliance ; and Bismarck had, as we have seen, been blamed for not guarding against it. But the Government made no attempt to undo what had been done, for it had no desire to pick a quarrel with either of the contracting parties at the time. The Allies, moreover, were busily engaged outside Europe—France in Africa and Indo-China, Russia in preparing for advances in the Far East ; and for some years the Bismarckian policy of encouraging such occupations was pursued. During the first decade of his reign, the German Emperor showed an inclination to remain on good terms with France ; and overtures for an understanding were made, on several occasions, by the German Foreign Office. M. Hanotaux, French Foreign Secretary from 1894 to 1898, was strongly in favour of a Franco-German entente ; but his successor, M. Delcassé, was of a different mind, and declared, on the morrow of Fashoda, that he would never be satisfied until he had reconciled England and France. Nevertheless, German attempts to win over the French were repeated in 1900 and 1901 ; they failed principally because the acceptance of overtures from Berlin

would have implied acquiescence in the Treaty of Frankfort and the final abandonment of Alsace-Lorraine.

It was about this time that Morocco began to take a leading place in French colonial policy. So far back as 1880 the condition of that country had been the subject of international discussion ; and at the Conference of Madrid, held in that year, the German delegate—it was before the days when Germany had a colonial policy at all—was instructed to support France. For some twenty years after this date, the French Government had been content with a slowly advancing trade, furthered by private effort ; and at the end of the century France held unquestionably the first place in Moroccan commerce. Great Britain came next, and Germany third, but a long way behind. Until the death of the Sultan Mulai Hassan, in 1894, England held a predominant political position at Féz ; but under his successor her influence declined, and an anarchical condition began to supervene. The idea of a British protectorate was more than once suggested, as was also that of an Italian protectorate ; but neither suggestion led to any practical results. When Lord Lansdowne took office as Foreign Secretary, England—largely owing to the experience of the Boer War—was definitely abandoning the “ splendid isolation ” on which she had hitherto prided herself ; and in M. Delcassé she found a statesman ready to meet her half-way.

Advances towards an understanding with Italy had already been made by the French Government ; and a commercial treaty (1898) paved the way for a more thorough understanding. This was achieved

in the Franco-Italian convention of 1900, confirmed two years later, under which France gave Italy a free hand in Tripoli, while Italy promised to raise no objection to a French advance in Morocco. This new orientation showed itself on the occasion of the renewal of the Triple Alliance in 1902, when the clauses of the treaty aimed especially at France, and adopted by Crispi at a time when Italy was very sore over Tunis, were left out, and the treaty became, so far at least as Italy was concerned, one of a merely defensive kind. Certain commercial agreements were made about the same time (1901-2) with the Sultan of Morocco, facilitating the "peaceful penetration" of the country by French trade. With Spain also a settlement was attempted in 1902. The French proposals were then declined in Madrid; and it was not till after the Anglo-French agreement had been signed (April, 1904) that a secret convention was made with Spain, delimiting the respective spheres of action of the two countries in Morocco (October, 1904).

I have dwelt at some length on these preliminaries because the change of policy implied by the conventions with England and Spain, taken together with the omission to offer Germany a share in the settlement of Morocco—as to which she had on previous occasions been consulted—was a very momentous one. I will not discuss the wisdom of this policy, beyond remarking that it was evidently hazardous. It was in no sense hostile to Germany, either in purport or in intention; but its exclusive character afforded some excuse for irritation.

Intimation of the Anglo-French agreement, so far

as Egypt was concerned, was at once given by the British Government to that of Germany ; the French Government informed the German Ambassador in Paris of the arrangement about Morocco. The German Government raised no objections. Prince Radolin told M. Delcassé that he found the French declarations about Morocco natural and reasonable ; and Count von Bülow made a similar statement in the Reichstag. Although the Emperor, in a public speech made shortly afterwards, gave somewhat cryptic utterance to his resentment, his Government took no overt action so long as the issue of the struggle in the East remained uncertain. But the Pan-German League was active ; and the Russian defeats, especially the fall of Port Arthur, produced a change in the attitude of Germany. In January, 1905, M. Rouvier, a politician opposed to Delcassé, succeeded M. Combes as Premier ; and intrigues against the Minister of Foreign Affairs at once began. The German Government, being questioned by the French Ambassador, declared that, not having been formally consulted with regard to Morocco, it did not consider itself bound to observe the Anglo-French agreement. On March 31st, shortly after the Battle of Mukden, the German Emperor landed at Tangier and made a speech in which he proclaimed himself the champion of Moroccan integrity. This was followed by the demand for an international conference to consider the question anew ; and Count Henckel von Donnersmarck was sent to Paris to require the dismissal of Delcassé. Active negotiations followed ; Europe became anxious ; the French Government, unprepared for war, was alarmed. Towards the end of

May the Battle of Tsushima finally destroyed all hope of Russian intervention ; and on June 6th the Council of Ministers in Paris, in spite of Delcassé's opposition, resolved to accept the German demand. Thereupon the Foreign Minister resigned.

This first success was not likely to satisfy Germany ; on the contrary, it could only encourage her to further activity and greater truculence. Moreover, it is to be remembered that the Conservative Government in England was, at the time, in a state of rapid dissolution ; and the Germans may well have fancied that a Liberal Ministry, already pledged to a change of policy in South Africa, would adopt a different attitude nearer home. The Government of Mr. Balfour, however, at an early stage of the proceedings, intimated to Berlin that, " in the event of an unprovoked attack upon the Republic, popular feeling in England would not suffer the French to be left unsupported " ; and this timely warning doubtless contributed to the maintenance of peace.

The principle of a conference once accepted, the bases of discussion had still to be arranged ; and it was not till September—ten days after the conclusion of the Peace of Portsmouth—that the agreement was signed. Even with the reservations that were made, the enforced recognition that Germany and her allies had a right to share in the settlement of Morocco was a diplomatic triumph of great importance for Berlin. Nor can it be denied that, although German interests in Morocco were small in comparison with those of England and France, Germany had some ground for asserting that so large and valuable a territory, and one so near to Europe, should not be disposed of by

three Powers without attention to the wishes of the rest. When we consider the importance of colonial expansion to Germany, and remember that Morocco was one of the few remaining portions of the earth's surface available for European colonization of a residential kind, it is not surprising that the German Government should have asserted its claim for consideration. It was the high-handed manner in which that claim was pressed, and the use which was made of the comparative isolation in which France found herself at the time, that gave genuine cause for alarm and irritation.

The Conference met at Algeciras in January, 1906, and sat for three months. To describe the discussion in detail would occupy too much space. It must suffice to say that Germany strove hard to isolate France; and that the conditions which she sought to impose were such that the chances of peace and war seemed for some time to be evenly balanced. But the British Government, maintaining herein the policy of its predecessor, held firm to the Entente; and Germany, receiving satisfaction on minor points, and finding all Europe, with the exception of her "brilliant second," Austria, arrayed against the concession of further demands, at length gave way. In the end, while the "integrity of Morocco" was formally recognized and the principle of the "open door" maintained—at least for a specified time—predominant political influence in that country was conceded to France. The first attempt to break up the Anglo-French Entente had failed; and our friends emerged from the conflict with more advantage than they could have expected a year before.

This was not, however, to be the end of the Moroccan question; and it will be convenient to carry the story a stage further before passing to other matters. Early in 1908 civil war broke out in Morocco. The reigning Sultan, Abdul Aziz, was forced to fly from the capital and took refuge in French territory. Germany promptly recognized the pretender, Mulai Hafid, and sent a consul to Fez, thus infringing the compact which attributed political predominance in Morocco to France. Eventually Mulai Hafid was recognized by the other Powers concerned.

This difficulty was hardly settled, when the so-called Casablanca incident (September, 1908)—a trivial dispute between French and German officials respecting some deserters of the Foreign Legion in a Moroccan port—raised another storm. The incident, which might have been easily settled by a Power peaceably disposed, was converted by Germany into an international question of the first magnitude; and the attitude she assumed was as menacing and pre-emptory as it had been three years before. But things in France had improved in the interval; the French army was in better trim; and confidence in the Entente (recently strengthened by the adhesion of Russia) was more strongly established. Clémenceau and Pichon held firm; and Germany, whose attention was largely occupied by the Balkan crisis, eventually agreed to submit the question to the Hague Tribunal. Even then the matter was not settled. The publication in the *Daily Telegraph* (October, 1908) of the famous interview with the Emperor caused so much excitement and

annoyance in Germany that the Government thought it advisable to divert public attention by another attempt to bully France. They suddenly demanded that France should make a public apology for the action of her officials, before the question was submitted to the Tribunal. But France, supported by England and Russia, again refused to humiliate herself; and the incident, which threatened to end in tragedy, was closed by an almost comic compromise.

Finally, in February, 1909, almost simultaneously with the settlement of the Bosnian question, a convention was signed between France and Germany. The object aimed at was to facilitate the execution of the Act of Algeciras. It was agreed that Germany should enjoy perfect equality of commercial rights in Morocco, and that France should have the political control necessary for the maintenance of order, with a view to the enjoyment of those rights. This convention, combined with the decision of the Hague Tribunal on the Casablanca incident, given in May, 1909, seemed to promise quiet for some time to come.

We must now turn to another storm-centre, the Near East. But before entering on it, we have to take note of an event of first-rate importance in regard to international relations—the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907. This convention was the natural though not immediate consequence of the Anglo-French agreement of 1904. For many years there had been difficulties between the two Powers with regard to their respective interests or spheres of activity in the East. In 1878 they had been on the

verge of war about Turkey. Russia then retaliated by intrigues at Cabul, which led to the Afghan War of 1878-9. In 1886 the Penjdeh incident nearly brought about an armed collision. The Anglo-Japanese alliance (1902) aimed at giving mutual security against Russian aggression, and, by localizing the war, enabled Japan to defeat her mighty antagonist. The growth of Russian influence at Lhasa provoked the Tibetan expedition of 1903-4; while in Persia conflicting interests produced a situation constantly tending to become more serious. In short, with Russia, as with France, before 1904, Great Britain had many points of friction, rendering impossible that harmonious co-operation which the aggressive spirit displayed by Germany in the Moroccan crisis had proved to be eminently desirable.

Chastened in spirit by her defeats in the Far East and by the domestic disturbances which added to her weakness, Russia was now in a condition to welcome the overtures made by the Conservative Government in England, and continued by their successors. The negotiation was long and difficult, but an end was reached in the Anglo-Russian agreement of August, 1907, which established a working compromise with regard to Persia, Afghanistan, and Tibet. The arrangement was not in all respects satisfactory, especially with regard to Persia; but it at least enabled the two Powers to work together harmoniously in Europe. The Dual Entente thus became a Triple Entente; and it was hoped, at least in this country—where pacific ideas prevailed and the Entente was regarded as purely defensive—that it would prove a bulwark of European peace. In

Germany, however, it was resented as *Einkreisungspolitik*, a policy deliberately adopted by the enemies of Germany with the malign intention of forcing on the country a strait waistcoat, which it was the duty, as well as the interest, of a powerful and self-respecting State at all costs to destroy.

We may now briefly consider the previous course of affairs in South-Eastern Europe, in order to understand the conditions under which the Balkan Question again forced its way in 1908 to the forefront of European politics. After 1885, when Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia coalesced into one State, the history of the Near East for the next twenty years cannot be said to have been uneventful. But such disturbances as occurred were localized; and the European Concert was, generally speaking, efficacious, not indeed in removing the deep-seated origins of trouble, but in preventing them from causing a European conflagration. The Serbo-Bulgarian War, which followed (1886) the amalgamation of Bulgaria, ended quickly in a Serbian defeat, and was prevented by Austrian intervention from producing any other results. In the same year Greece, desirous of making war on Turkey, was hindered by a naval blockade from carrying out her intention.

Revolutionary movements in Crete, aiming at a union with the Greek kingdom, were for many years the chief source of trouble. An insurrection broke out in 1889; and religious differences between the Christians and Mohammedans in the island embittered the racial conflict thence arising. In 1895 the Sultan succeeded in allaying the quarrel, but it broke out afresh in the following year; and the desire for

annexation found a growing response in Greece. In 1897 Colonel Vassos, accompanied by Greek supporters, landed in Crete; but the Powers, while promising autonomy, ordered him to leave. National feeling in Greece had, however, risen by this time to bursting-point; and the "Thirty Days' War" with Turkey followed. The Greeks were badly beaten; the Powers again intervened; and the *status quo* was restored. A temporary settlement of the Cretan question was achieved in the following year (1898). The Turkish officials left the island; and Prince George of Greece was installed as High Commissioner, under the nominal suzerainty of the Porte. In 1906 the Prince resigned, and his place was taken by M. Ziamis; but the compromise was maintained, with the support of international troops, till 1909. It should be observed that from these transactions, so far as they were to the disadvantage of Turkey, the German Government, so far as possible, held aloof. A German contingent was, however, sent to join, for a time, the contingents of the other Powers in Crete.

Meanwhile Rumania, which had become a kingdom in 1881, pursued the even tenour of her way. Her intimate connection with the Central Powers, established after the Russo-Turkish War, was maintained under her Hohenzollern ruler, King Charles, and was strengthened by a military convention in 1896. This convention appears to have been renewed, with more specific objects, in 1900.¹ Remote from the chief areas of disturbance, politically within the German group, but from the cultural point of

¹ Guéchoff, *L'Alliance Balkanique*, pp. 61, 62.

view dependent rather on Latin civilization, Rumania made great social and economic progress during a period of thirty-five years.

Bulgaria, on the other hand, fell gradually into the orbit of Russian influence. Two years after her junction with Eastern Rumelia, the Prince, Alexander of Battenberg, was forced to abdicate ; and Ferdinand of Coburg, a grandson of Louis Philippe, was chosen Prince in his stead. His great minister, Stambuloff, resisted Russian influence until his dismissal in 1894. Ferdinand made his peace with the Tsar ; and thenceforward the foreign policy of Bulgaria was distinctly Russophil. By a convention between Russia and Bulgaria signed in 1902, as a counterpoise to Austrian influence in Serbia, Russia undertook to uphold the integrity of Bulgaria.

Meanwhile Serbia had passed through stormy times. Under the last two kings of the Obrenovitch dynasty, Milan and Alexander—Milan assumed the royal title in 1882—Serbia was dominated by Austrian influence, which found expression in the Austro-Serbian convention of 1900. But Milan, constantly tampering with the constitution, became so unpopular that in 1889 he abdicated in favour of his son Alexander, who, after his coming of age in 1893, proved as incapable and ill-advised a ruler as his father. His unfortunate marriage, his proscription of the Radical party, and his obstinate adherence to the Austrian connection, combined to fan the fire of national discontent to a white heat ; and in 1903 he and his Queen were murdered by a group of officers in circumstances of great brutality. Peter Karageorgevitch succeeded ; and the foreign relations

of Serbia at once took on a different colour. The new direction was indicated by a secret treaty between Serbia and Bulgaria signed in 1904,¹ and by a Serbo-Bulgarian convention in 1906, which was regarded as a step towards a customs-union between the two countries. Austria showed her resentment by imposing a prohibitive tariff on the chief article of Serbian export—pigs; and her relations with Serbia have been unfriendly ever since.

Of Serbia's neighbour, Montenegro—separated from her, however, by the Sanjak of Novi-Bazar, for thirty years in the occupation of Austria-Hungary—nothing need be said except that, to the extent of her capacity, she followed in the wake of wealthier States, and, largely by the aid of Italian capital, gradually put on some at least of the externals of civilization. It was not till 1910 that her Prince followed the example of other Balkan rulers, and adopted the title of King. As a Slav State, Montenegro looked to Russia for support against aggression on the part of her great neighbour to the north. To sum up, the rivalry between Austria and Russia in the Balkan peninsula was fairly evenly balanced till 1903, Serbia and Rumania going with the former, Montenegro and Bulgaria with the latter. But in that year the balance was upset by Serbia going over to the Russian side—a change in which Austria-Hungary was not likely to acquiesce.

During this period, especially after the German Emperor's second visit in 1898, Turkey was falling more and more under German influence. Alienated from Russia, Germany looked to Turkey to balance

¹ Guéchoff, *L'Alliance Balkanique*, p. 14.

the loss. While continuing to strengthen her commercial connection and her financial control at Constantinople, she was careful not to annoy the Sultan by inconvenient suggestions on behalf of the oppressed communities subject to his control, or still more disagreeable interventions such as those on which the other Powers occasionally ventured. Germany could not altogether abstain from taking a part in the European Concert, but the "flute" on which she performed was seldom heard; and, when it produced any sound at all, it played a tune more pleasing to the Turk than was that given out by the rest of the band.

This attitude was especially manifested in regard to the troubles in Macedonia—the real storm-centre of the Balkan Peninsula. In that extraordinary *mélange* of nationalities and religions, Serbs, Greeks, and Bulgarians lived together in inextricable confusion; even Rumania had, in the wandering shepherds known as Kutzo-Wlachs, an excuse for putting a finger in the pie. National animosities were accentuated by the religious differences between the Orthodox, the Hexarchists, and the Patriarchists. Oppression, anarchy, and internecine strife were chronic; and, as the hour of Ottoman dissolution seemed approaching, each of the interested States sought, by violent but covert action on behalf of its own nationals, to advance its claim to the disputed territory at the expense of its rivals. It was obvious that any serious disturbance in this region affected the interests of the neighbouring Balkan States, and consequently those of the Great Powers which,

through the minor States, sought to extend their influence over the whole peninsula.

Such a disturbance was threatened by the Greco-Turkish War of 1897. In view of this event, Turkey had for some time cultivated good relations with Bulgaria; and it was feared that the Bulgarians might join the Turks against Greece with a view to obtaining concessions in Macedonia. Austria and Russia therefore came to an understanding (April, 1897), by which they agreed that the *status quo* should be maintained, while recognizing each other's respective spheres of influence in the west and east of the Peninsula. For a time the danger was evaded; but it recurred in 1903, when the state of things in Macedonia was passing from bad to worse. Some sort of intervention appeared inevitable; and Great Britain put forward a proposal for the internationalization of the disturbed districts. At this moment Russia was preparing for the conflict in Manchuria, and had no wish to see other Powers settling Balkan affairs while her energies were occupied elsewhere. The Tsar therefore approached the Emperor of Austria, whose foreign policy was then directed by the pacific Goluchowski; and a meeting between the two sovereigns took place at Mürzsteg (September, 1903), at which a programme of reforms for Macedonia was drawn up. This was pressed upon the Sultan, and theoretically accepted; but, as the requisite supervision was not provided, the reforms produced little or no result.

The policy of co-operation with Russia was naturally unpopular with the forward party in Vienna, and detested by the Magyar element in the

Dual Monarchy. The feeling grew that a chance of pushing Austrian interests in the Balkans had been lost in 1903, and that something must be done to balance the disadvantageous change in Serbian policy. The Russian defeats in the Far East appeared to afford an opportunity which it would be absurd to neglect. These views produced a change in the Austrian ministry. The German Emperor made no secret of his dissatisfaction at the inadequacy of the assistance which the Austrian representative had given him at Algeciras—his remark about the "brilliant second" was interpreted as conveying a reproof under the guise of praise; and in 1906 Goluchowski retired. His place was taken by a Hungarian, Count Aehrenthal; and Austrian policy entered upon an active phase. Its chief object was to incorporate the provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, placed under Austrian protection in 1878, in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Once fully in possession of these districts, and occupying the Sanjak of Novi-Bazar, Austria might push her way to Salonika, and thus gain direct access to the Ægean. This project, as we shall see, had the full support of Germany.

It is said that the Austro-Hungarian Minister, soon after he took office, proposed to the Russian Minister, Isvolski, in the spring of 1907, to renew the Münchstein agreement of four years earlier, but with a very important difference. Germany and France were now to be brought into the entente, with certain advantages all round. Austria was to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina; Russia was to gain the opening of the Dardanelles; France was to help

Germany, financially and otherwise, in the promotion of the Bagdad railway, and was to receive, in return, full German recognition in Morocco. The ultimate object—to break up the Anglo-French and Anglo-Russian ententes, and to isolate Great Britain—must have been apparent. Incidentally the proposal throws light on the relative importance attached by statesmen in Berlin to the question of Morocco and that of the Near East. If Austrian control over the Balkans, with all that this implied for both the German Powers, could be secured, Morocco might be neglected. The proposal had its attractions for Russia, but the negotiations with England were on the point of completion, and Isvolski declined. In the following August (1907) the Anglo-Russian agreement was signed.

As a counter-blow to that convention, Aehrenthal now brought forward (February, 1908) a proposal for a railway through the Sanjak, which should link up with that already running by way of Uskub to Mitrovitza. Thereupon Russia, acting in concert with Serbia, proposed another railway which should run direct from the Danube to the Adriatic—a project which received the support of Italy. Both these railways, as crossing Turkish territory, would have required the consent of the Porte. While these projects were in the air, England and Russia issued a joint proposal for reforms in Macedonia, which, like the British suggestion of 1903, would have tended to establish international control. A conference of ambassadors on the subject of Macedonian reforms was held at Constantinople; but its proceedings were rendered abortive by the opposition

of Germany and Austria. Aehrenthal had secretly bought the consent of the Porte to the Novi-Bazar railway by promising to resist reforms—conduct which Sir E. Grey with justice stigmatized as disloyal. In June, 1908, King Edward VII had an interview with the Tsar at Reval, which was taken to indicate the probability of joint action in the Balkans, and has been supposed by German writers, on very inadequate evidence, to have involved Asiatic schemes of far wider scope. Whatever may have been the truth about the interview, it is clear that the prospect of Anglo-Russian intervention in the Balkans was very distasteful to the statesmen of Vienna and Berlin, and stimulated them to action which nearly precipitated a European war.

The Reval interview had just occurred when a revolution in Turkey took Europe by surprise and gave Austria the opportunity she desired. So far back as 1891, discontent with the despotic and corrupt government of Abūl Hamid had led to the formation of the so-called "Committee of Union and Progress" at Geneva. It was subsequently transferred to Paris, whence for some years it carried on a subterranean propaganda in the Turkish Empire, which appeared to have little result. In 1906, however, the Committee felt itself strong enough to move to Salonika; and its tenets gained ground rapidly in the Turkish army. The imminence of European intervention in Macedonia stimulated its activity; and suppressive action on the part of the Sultan brought the revolt to a head. In July, 1908, certain regiments stationed at Salonika marched on

Constantinople, overthrew the Sultan's Government, and installed the Committee in power.

The "Young Turkish" revolution was welcomed in the greater part of Europe as an event fraught with the promise of better days for Turkey and the subject races of the Ottoman Empire, and as inaugurating an era of reform which would solve the Eastern Question by removing the causes of perennial disturbance. So convinced were the Powers that reforms would now be voluntarily introduced, that they removed their officials from Macedonia and handed back to the Turks the control they had assumed. From the political point of view the revolution was hailed by the Entente Powers as a set-back for Austria and Germany, whose influence at Constantinople was supposed to depend on the domination of Abdul Hamid. All these expectations were doomed to be disappointed.

Meanwhile Isvolski had become aware of the Austrian intention to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina at all costs—an intention which, however, was kept so secret that when in August King Edward visited the Emperor Francis Joseph at Ischl nothing whatever was disclosed to him. Isvolski now took up again the project of opening the Dardanelles, which had been dropped for a time when he declined Aehrenthal's proposals a year before. This project he now hoped to carry through by direct arrangement with Austria-Hungary. Two months after the revolution in Constantinople (September, 1908) he had an interview with Aehrenthal at Buchlau, in which he is said to have consented to the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the condition that

Austria should assist in the opening of the Dardanelles. Armed with this (at least conditional) undertaking, he went on to Paris and London, where, however, his project of a deal with Austria appears to have been coldly received. Before he could readjust himself to the situation, the statesmen in Vienna had taken the step to which he had conditionally assented.

Their intention was not concealed from Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria, who was anxious to extract his own profit from the state of affairs in Turkey. At an interview which he had with the Emperor Francis Joseph at Pesth, in September, 1908, an understanding as to simultaneous action seems to have been reached. Whether Ferdinand subsequently carried out his share of the bargain, or forced his partner's hand, we do not know. At all events, it was agreed that advantage should be taken of the confusion that still reigned in Constantinople, and of the precarious position of the Young Turk Government, already threatened by the forces of reaction. Accordingly, on October 5th, Ferdinand proclaimed the independence of his State and was crowned Tsar of Bulgaria; and two days later Bosnia and Herzegovina were formally annexed by Austria-Hungary. To appease Turkish feeling, the right to occupy the Sanjak of Novi-Bazar was simultaneously given up. The consent of the signatory Powers was not asked for these infractions of the Treaty of Berlin.

These events raised a great outcry throughout Europe. The acts themselves might perhaps have been ratified by consent, if done in a less arbitrary and illegitimate fashion, for the formal annexation

made little real change in the condition of the two provinces concerned, and the independence of Bulgaria would hardly have provoked remonstrance except from Turkey. But the cynical disregard of treaties, and the insolent contempt for European opinion, which the manner of the action showed, were of evil omen, and naturally caused widespread indignation. Anxious that, at least, these things should not form a precedent, the Entente Powers proposed that a conference should be held to discuss the matter ; but Austria-Hungary and Germany refused.

The strongest opposition to their action was aroused in Serbia, where for some time past the feeling of common nationality and of brotherhood with the Serbs of Bosnia and Herzegovina had been growing stronger. The dream of a South (Yougo) Slav union, of which these provinces, along with Montenegro, would have formed the central part, had stirred the imagination of the Serbian people to its depths. The realization of such a dream involved, it must be recognized, serious dangers for the Austrian Empire ; for a strong Slav State on its southern border would have exercised a powerful attraction on the Slav populations already embraced in the Dual Monarchy. It is not surprising, therefore, that Austria felt bound to oppose the Serbian ambition ; and this hostility was even stronger in the Hungarian portion of the monarchy, where the ruling Magyar race were convinced that their dominant position would be fatally imperilled by an advance of Slav nationality. Nor was this all, for behind Austria stood Germany, firmly resolved that neither a Greater Serbia nor any

other obstacle should bar her from realizing her dream of preponderance in the Near East. It was now for the first time that the teachings of those thinkers and idealists to whom I have referred above (pp. 38-40) bore manifest fruit ; now for the first time we clearly see, at least in outline, the fundamental cause of the present war.

During the autumn of the year 1908 and the following winter months, negotiations between the Powers were continued ; and the tempers of the disputants, especially of Serbia, became more and more embittered. The Serbs claimed that at any rate they should receive some compensation, in the cession of a corner of Herzegovina which would have given them continuity with Montenegro ; but this was just what Austria was determined to avoid. The British Government protested, but without any intention of taking up arms. Between the Eastern Powers, however, the quarrel came to the verge of open hostility. Austria mobilized part of her army on the Danube, whereupon Russia, in support of Serbia, replied by a partial mobilization on her side. War seemed on the point of breaking out, when Germany intervened with what was practically an ultimatum to the Tsar—an intimation that, if Russia attacked Austria, she would find the German legions marching with their allies. This was, of course, a justifiable warning, in view of the fact that an attack upon Austria would have formed a *casus belli* under the alliance of 1879 ; but it shows the difficulty of determining what is an “ aggressive ” war. England and France were disinclined to go the length of supporting Russia in extreme measures. They

counselled peace ; and Russia, whose strength had not yet recovered from the wounds inflicted in the Japanese War, was obliged to give way. The *fait accompli* was sullenly recognized ; but Russia did not forget the humiliation she underwent in pocketing the German affront. Serbia had naturally to follow suit. A money payment, together with the retrocession of the Sanjak (already mentioned), sufficed to indemnify Turkey for the abandonment of her rights over Bosnia and Herzegovina (February, 1909). Similar means were found, with the aid of Russia, to compensate the Porte, in April of the same year, for the loss of its nominal sovereignty over Bulgaria.

The net result was a severe diplomatic defeat for the Entente Powers—a defeat to which they need never have exposed themselves had they regulated their policy in accordance with their forces and their strength of will, and acted together in well-considered harmony. The prestige of Germany was much enhanced in the eyes of Turkey and the Balkan States, and that of the Entente correspondingly lowered ; while Prince von Bülow could congratulate his country on the decisive failure of the *Einkreisungspolitik*. This was a little premature, but there can be no doubt that the episode was highly detrimental to the cause of the Entente in that area which Germany and Austria regarded as of paramount importance.

Meanwhile the Young Turks, whose seizure of power had been the immediate occasion of the incidents I have narrated, had not had it all their own way in Constantinople. The constitution which

Midhat Pasha had introduced thirty-two years before, and which Abdul Hamid had "suspended" in 1877, was revived; and a parliament of the Empire was summoned in accordance with it. But a reaction began; the Committee was opposed by the "Liberal Union"; and in April, 1909, a counter-revolution took place, which restored the Sultan to power. His recovery was, however, of very brief duration; the army, under Mahmud Shefket, again marched on Constantinople; and Abdul Hamid was finally deposed. His brother was set up as a "constitutional" Sultan in his place, but the Committee governed in the Sultan's name.

The example of Bulgaria naturally affected another outlying province—the island of Crete. The demand for union with Greece was revived; but the Powers, unwilling to inflict another blow on the Young Turk Government, refused. A settlement was difficult, but eventually the Greek flag was hauled down, the foreign troops were withdrawn (July, 1909), and the *status quo* was restored. The Greek Government was obliged to acquiesce, but the rebuff acted unfavourably on its position at home; and a sort of revolution took place, in which the army, acting under the direction of the "Military League," seized control. But a "saviour of society" was found in the person of M. Venizelos, who had led, with wisdom and moderation, the nationalist party in Crete. This statesman was called in; a National Assembly met (September, 1910); the Military League was voluntarily dissolved; and Venizelos became Prime Minister. Under him the constitution was revised (January, 1911); and at a general election (March,

1912) he was returned to power by an immense majority.

We must now return to the other end of the Mediterranean, and take up again the story of Moroccan affairs, which we left at the point reached by the settlement of the Casablanca incident and the Franco-German convention of 1909. Subsequently to that agreement, several well-intentioned efforts were made with a view to the co-operation of French and German capitalists in opening up the country and exploiting its mineral wealth. Such were the proposed "Union des Mines," the attempted combination between the French Ngoko-Sangha Company and a German company in Kamerun, the joint Congo-Kamerun railway, and other projects. For one reason or another, all these schemes broke down; and this failure produced the impression in Germany that the French were unwilling to carry out their portion of the agreement. The Pan-Germans, on their side, were dissatisfied with the concession of political control to France, and endeavoured to use their commercial position in order to bring about a *condominium* with that country. Against these efforts Sir E. Grey found it necessary to protest in March, 1911. As a *condominium* was put out of court by the convention of 1909, the Germans fell back on other objects; but they were divided between the demand for "compensation," which they hoped to get in French Congo, and an "exchange" which would have given them a footing on the west coast of Morocco.

The breakdown of the Congo-Kamerun railway

proposal unfortunately coincided with a French expedition to Fez, undertaken because of the increasing anarchy in Morocco, and the danger to which European residents in Fez appeared to be exposed. The French justified the expedition on the ground that their agreement with Germany gave them the right of political control, and laid on them the duty of maintaining order. The Germans insisted that they had never intended to allow France to convert Morocco into a French province ; Morocco, in short, was not to be "Tunisified." Encouraged by their success in the Eastern crisis, by the political disturbances which divided England, and by the instability of French governments, they conceived that the time had come for improving the position which they had been obliged to accept in the Pact of Algeciras. Following the precedent of Tangier, they resolved on another theatrical stroke ; and on July 1st, 1911, the *Panther* cast anchor off Agadir.

This incident plainly meant a demand for a port on the Atlantic, with claims over an indefinite *hinterland*. An acrimonious negotiation followed. The demand for a portion of West Morocco could not be accepted by France, for, apart from the intrinsic value of the district and the unjustifiable nature of the claim, the French position in Morocco would have been exposed to constant danger from German intrigues, and the footing gained would have been made a basis for further demands. Nor could it be accepted by England, for, apart from our pledges to France, a German naval station at Agadir or Mogador would have endangered our communications with the Cape and our trade with South

America. England therefore intimated that on this point she could not give way ; and Germany shifted her ground.

For some months the situation was critical. The Germans, asserting that the French advance had destroyed the Pact of Algeciras and relieved them of all obligation to observe their pledges, declared that the new situation thus created justified them in demanding a *quid pro quo*. It should be added that the validity of the Pact had been limited to five years, and that that period had now elapsed. The attitude of the Caillaux ministry was not devoid of suspicious elements ; and the British Government had to make it plain that they must have a voice in the decision. In August war seemed imminent ; but the French Government gave up the principle of " exchange " and accepted the German demand for " compensation." The fact was that France had, in the course of the last ten years, gained a vast new province, for which she had already " compensated " other nations—England in Egypt, Italy in Tripoli, Spain in Tangier. It was Germany's turn to receive payment ; and payment was made by the surrender of the northern part of French Congo, a district important to Germany both for geographical reasons and from its wealth in rubber. The convention embodying this concession, and, on the German side, the recognition of a French protectorate in Morocco, was signed at Berlin on November 4th, 1911.¹ The Agadir " incident " was at an end.

The Pan-Germans and the colonial party were

¹ The protectorate was formally accepted by the Sultan of Morocco in March, 1912.

dissatisfied at not getting more ; but Germany had won an important accession of territory. She had, moreover, successfully reasserted her claim to compensation for colonial advances made by another country, and her right to be consulted with regard to the disposal of a territory in which her commercial interests were comparatively small. The compromise adopted must be regarded as having been, on the whole, in Germany's favour. The arrogance with which she pushed her claims was not likely to improve her relations with the Entente Powers ; but it is to be observed—and the observation is important in regard to our attempt to elucidate the fundamental aims of her policy—that, in the negotiations about Morocco, Germany never went so far as to present an ultimatum, as she had done in the Balkan crisis of 1909.

We have now to return to Balkan affairs ; and in what follows we approach the last stage of the international quarrel, that which leads directly to the outbreak of the present war. Just at the time when the Moroccan dispute was passing out of its acute stage, towards the end of September, 1911, the world was startled by the news that a fresh crisis had arisen in the East. Italy conceived that the time had come to carry into effect the arrangement with France about Tripoli, made ten years before. She accordingly sent an ultimatum (September 26th) to the Porte, in which she declared that the treatment meted out by the Turkish Government to Italians in Tripoli and the Cyrenaica called aloud for her armed intervention. Three days later war was declared ; and

the Italian invasion of Tripoli began. The Turkish forces, especially at sea, were no match for the Italians, who landed without difficulty and proceeded to occupy the coast and the maritime districts. They were unable to penetrate far inland ; nevertheless the whole territory was early in November formally annexed to the Kingdom of Italy. In the spring of the following year Rhodes and other islands off the coast of Asia Minor were occupied. But the war continued till a fresh storm in the Balkan Peninsula compelled the Turks to make peace with Italy at Lausanne (October, 1912). It was agreed that the islands should be retroceded to Turkey when the Turkish troops finally left Libya ; but this stipulation had not taken effect when the present war broke out.

The storm to which I have referred was the work of the Balkan League, which attacked Turkey in the autumn of 1912. Certain steps had been taken some time before (above, p. 81) which indicated the possibility of joint action between Serbia and Bulgaria ; but circumstances, in Macedonia and elsewhere, were not favourable to any real union. What really convinced the Balkan States of the necessity of combination was the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the fear of further Austrian progress ; the occasion which actually called the league into existence was the Tripolitan War. Whether the Italo-Turkish War and the Balkan War that followed are to be connected with the visits paid by the Kings of Serbia and Bulgaria to Petrograd in 1910, and the visit paid by the Tsar to the King of Italy at Racconigi in 1911, must

remain for the present unknown ; but it seems highly probable that Italy counted on a rising of the Balkan States as likely to force the Turks to cede Tripoli—a calculation which was justified by the results.

It was in March, 1911, that M. Guéchoff became President of the Council in Bulgaria. He was at once approached by the Serbian Government, which had made similar overtures to his predecessors, with a view to a defensive and offensive alliance. The Bulgarian Premier was at first desirous of coming to an understanding with Turkey respecting the reforms to be introduced in Macedonia ; but a short experience convinced him that the attempt was hopeless. The negotiations with Serbia were going on, when the declaration of war by Italy brought them to a head. The Bulgarian minister was at once authorized by his Government to conclude a defensive and offensive alliance with Serbia ; but the terms of the agreement raised considerable difficulties. The Serbs insisted on the consent of Russia being obtained—a point to which Bulgaria raised no serious objections ; but the settlement of the frontiers of the two States in Macedonia, in the event of a successful issue of the conflict with Turkey, was hard to arrange. The difficulty would have been removed by the elevation of Macedonia to the position of an autonomous State, as suggested by Bulgaria ; but the Serbs would not hear of this solution. After much discussion it was agreed to divide Macedonia into three zones, of which the northern should fall to Serbia, the southern to Bulgaria, while the partition of the intermediate zone was to be submitted, after the war, to the arbitration of the Tsar.

On this basis the treaty of alliance was signed on March 7th, 1912.

A month later a military convention was signed, which contemplated not only a war with Turkey but armed intervention on the part of Austria and Rumania, as a result of their convention of twelve years before (see p. 79). It is clear that Russia was consulted during the negotiations, and that the treaty, with its secret articles, was communicated to that Power on its conclusion. The Tsar gave his approval; but there does not appear to be any published evidence for the assertion of certain French and German writers that he either initiated or guided the negotiation. It is impossible, however, to resist the conclusion that the alliance had in view the defence of Balkan independence against Austrian aggression almost, if not quite, as much as the overthrow of Turkish power.

Meanwhile informal negotiations between Greece and Bulgaria had been going on since May, 1911. They became official in consequence of the outbreak of the war between Italy and Turkey, and the partial mobilization of the Turkish forces in Europe which immediately followed. The initiative in this case came from Greece, and was actively pushed by M. Venizelos, a personal friend of M. Guéchoff. The difficulties in regard to a partition of the expected conquests in southern Macedonia and Thrace were similar to, if less serious than, those between Serbia and Bulgaria; but time pressed, and they were simply passed over in the treaty of alliance, which was signed on May 29th, 1912. The military convention was not completed till the following

September. It is noteworthy that the Greek Government declined to enter into any discussion with Austria, as that Power had given Greece to understand that, in the event of success, it would claim Salonika. Arrangements with Montenegro appear to have been begun at a much later date than those with the other Powers—not till June 1912; nor did they, at least so far as Bulgaria was concerned, go beyond a verbal understanding, which was reached in the following August.

Meanwhile the Young Turk Government in Constantinople was evidently crumbling to its fall. The garrison of Adrianople mutinied; the Albanians rose in insurrection, and occupied Uskub and other frontier towns; and on August 14th Count Berchtold, who had become Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs on the death of Aehrenthal, issued a proposal for reforms in European Turkey, based on the principle of decentralization and practical autonomy. Meanwhile peace negotiations between Italy and Turkey had begun. The time for action, if Austrian intervention were to be anticipated and the Tripolitan War utilized, was evidently come. M. Sazonoff constantly urged moderation, and advised the Allies not to go to war, but they were determined to press their quarrel to extremes. On September 29th the Turkish Government decreed a general mobilization. Next day the Allies sent an ultimatum to Constantinople, and followed this up by mobilizing their forces. The Powers endeavoured at the last moment to stay the conflict for which their mutual jealousies, and their consequent failure to secure the necessary reforms, had supplied an only too weighty justifica-

tion. On October 8th the Austrian and Russian Governments issued a joint note, strongly disapproving of a rupture, and declaring that they would not allow it to result in any change in the *status quo*. On the same day the five Great Powers (Italy, being still at war with Turkey, could not take part) combined to urge reform upon the Porte. But this belated attempt at intervention was vain. The Porte having sent no reply to the Allies' demands, war was declared on October 12th. Montenegro had already opened hostilities four days before.

The first result of the war, and of the surprising victories won by the Allies, was that the Powers were forced to abandon the position they had taken up with respect to the maintenance of the *status quo ante* in European Turkey. So early as November 2nd M. Sazonoff, in a circular note, recognized this necessity. Almost at the same time he informed the Allies that Serbia could not be allowed access to the Adriatic. Count Berchtold, on behalf of Austria, made a similar communication at Belgrade. It appears that the resolution in favour of an autonomous Albania had been adopted by Austria in the lifetime of Aehrenthal, so far back, at least, as the spring of 1911. Herein she had the support not only of Russia but also of Italy, which was equally loth to allow the Serbs a footing at Durazzo or Valona. Germany threw her weight on the same side. In the face of this agreement, England and France, had they desired another solution, could hardly have resisted ; but it seems probable that they did not foresee (as did the Germans) the disastrous consequences of this determination on the future of the Balkan League.

When, therefore, after the declaration of an armistice (November 5th) a conference of ambassadors of the neutral Powers and of representatives of the belligerents met in London, in December, it was on this basis that the discussion was carried on. Even with this preliminary understanding, a settlement proved very difficult. At the conference there were two distinct sets of negotiations—those between the belligerents and Turkey, and those between the Powers respecting the limits of an autonomous Albania. Russia pressed the claims of Serbia to certain frontier towns; Greece demanded a large portion of Epirus; Austria supported the rights of her new creation, Albania. The possession of Scutari, claimed by Montenegro, also proved a dangerous bone of contention. On more than one occasion, a breach between the Powers seemed imminent; but eventually a compromise was arranged. Serbia and Greece were obliged to acquiesce, but it eventually required an Austrian ultimatum to drive the Montenegrins out of Scutari.

Between Turkey and the Allies, on the other hand, a settlement proved unattainable, largely owing to the fact that the Turks were still holding out in the fortresses of Scutari, Janina, and Adrianople. In Constantinople opinions were sharply divided between the supporters of peace and those who wished to continue the struggle. In January, 1913, a military revolution took place; the Young Turks recovered power; and in February the negotiations were broken off. The war was renewed; and before long the three strongholds fell into the hands of the Allies. Turkey was now obliged to yield, and the

Conference was renewed. But the haggling about frontiers continued for many weeks ; and it was not till Sir E. Grey intimated to the delegates that, if they did not come to terms at once, they must leave the country, that peace was signed, on May 30th, 1913.

The Balkan Alliance was triumphant. A combination of four small States had effected, in six months, what the Great Powers had hitherto failed to do. The Christians of European Turkey were relieved from Mohammedan tyranny ; the Cretan question was solved by the union of the island with Greece ; and the Turks were confined to Constantinople and a few miles of territory on its landward side. To Austria and Germany the blow was severe. They had indeed succeeded in interposing, by means of an independent Albania, a westward barrier to South-Slav ambitions, and in checking the economic growth of Serbia by cutting off her access to the sea. But this gain was little to set off against the overthrow of Germany's friend and potential ally Turkey, and the establishment of the Balkan Confederation athwart the roads to Salonika and Constantinople. So serious was the set-back to German ambitions, that Germany at once set about largely increasing her military forces, and levying a special war-tax to support them. The fall of Turkey, and the consequent shifting of the balance of power to the disadvantage of Germany, were publicly urged by the German Chancellor as a justification for these measures. It was obviously to the interest of the German Powers that the Balkan League should disappear ; and, unfortunately, a deadly quarrel

between its members came only too opportunely to their aid.

Differences between Serbia and Bulgaria as to the partition of their Macedonian conquests had begun almost immediately after the outbreak of war. When an independent Albania, stretching from the frontier of Montenegro to that of Greece, was established by the Powers, Serbia put forward a claim to compensation in Macedonia, on the ground that she thus suffered a loss not contemplated when the alliance with Bulgaria was made. A similar claim was advanced by Greece, on the ground of her disappointment in Epirus; while the possession of Salonika, over which Greeks and Bulgarians had come to blows even before the peace with Turkey, was another cause of dispute. With a view to the enforcement of their claims, these two States, some time before the end of the first war, contracted an alliance against the third. Bulgaria, on the other side, took her stand on the letter of her treaty with Serbia; while geographical conditions rendered it practically impossible to settle with Greece until the Serbo-Bulgarian frontier should have been determined. The treaty, rigidly interpreted, was doubtless on Bulgaria's side; but equity, not to mention policy, demanded that some concessions should be made to her allies.

In these circumstances, arbitration seemed to be the only alternative to war. Wisdom dictated such a course; and to arbitration M. Guéckoff inclined. But a malign influence appears to have intervened; it has been positively asserted that Austria promised Bulgaria her support in case of war, and both previous

and subsequent events render the statement highly probable. Whatever may have been the cause, the minister failed to convert his sovereign to his views, and therefore, on the day of the signature of peace with Turkey, resigned. His place was taken by the headstrong Dr. Daneff, whose arrogant attitude had created a bad impression at the Conference of London during the winter before. The Tsar attempted to intervene, and pressed the disputants to accept his arbitration. Greece and Serbia hesitated. The Bulgarian Cabinet, shrinking from the conflict, was willing to submit its case ; and Dr. Daneff prepared to go to Petrograd. But the King and the chauvinist faction in Bulgaria had control over the army ; and on June 29th the Bulgarian troops attacked their former allies.

Against Greece and Serbia alone the Bulgarians might possibly have been able to make head, but a third enemy now appeared. Rumania, which had taken no part in the Balkan League and had remained inactive during the recent war, subsequently demanded—on regular German principles—that, though she had done nothing to secure the victory over Turkey, she should receive compensation for the gains of the Allies. The Powers had assented ; Bulgaria had not refused ; and by a protocol issued in Petrograd on May 13th, a compensation (accepted by Rumania) had been allotted to her in the north-eastern portion of the Bulgarian territory. The outbreak of hostilities, however, afforded too good an opportunity of enlarging this “compensation” ; a Rumanian army therefore crossed the Danube and marched on Sofia.

The Turks naturally availed themselves of the situation, and set about recovering their lost territory, including Adrianople, which the Bulgarians abandoned to its fate. Thus attacked on three sides, Bulgaria was forced to accept whatever terms her enemies thought proper to impose. The terms were hard. Serbia took the whole of the disputed central zone in Macedonia, while the coastal portion, including Salonika and Kavalla, was given to Greece. A large strip on the north-east, including Silistria, was ceded to Rumania ; and the Turks recovered Adrianople with the surrounding territory. Bulgaria was shut off from the Ægean, except on a few miles of coast, including the very inadequate port of Dedeagatch. These cessions were embodied in the Treaty of Bucarest, signed on August 10th, 1913, and in a Turco-Bulgarian treaty, signed on September 29th. A more dramatic reversal of fortune, a sterner illustration of the Nemesis which pursues hubristic insolence, has rarely been seen.

The second Balkan War modified the results of the first, in two important points, to the advantage of the German Powers. In the first place, Turkey, to a certain extent, recovered her position ; and the moral effect of this revival was probably worth even more than the territory she regained. Secondly—and this was still more important—the Balkan League, the only power which could secure Balkan independence against Austria-Hungary on the one side and Turkey on the other, was hopelessly broken up ; while the seeds of deadly animosity and a craving for revenge were sown between its two most important members. On the other hand, Serbia

became more than ever the hope and focus of Yougo-Slav nationalism, which threatened the very existence of the Austro-Hungarian Empire ; and Serbia had received an enormous accession of power. Greece, too, in alliance with Serbia, stood across the southward road from Vienna, and was established in possession of Salonika, long the aim of Austro-Hungarian statesmen, and preferable, as a commercial outlet, even to Trieste.

If Vienna was thus prejudicially affected, it is hardly necessary to point out that the dreams of the statesmen in Berlin—the open road to Byzantium and Bagdad, the great Central European Customs Union which was to include the Balkan States and Turkey, the *point-d'appui* against England in Egypt and the East—faded into thin air, if the results of the Balkan wars could not be undone. A reversal of these conditions became, therefore, from this moment, the primary object of Austro-German policy. It was only a good opportunity, a satisfactory pretext, that had to be found.

On more than one occasion, in the year 1913, a war between Austria and Serbia was very near. We have it on the authority of M. Giolitti that, only three days after the signature of the Treaty of Bucarest, Austria sounded Italy as to a war with Serbia. The proposal was declined, on the ground that the Triple Alliance did not contemplate such an act of aggression ; but there were more potent reasons. Italy, which had joined Austria to keep the Serbians from access to the Adriatic, could not regard with equanimity the substitution of Austrian for Serbian influence in Albania. Nevertheless, the quarrel nearly

came to a head. In her anxiety to reach the Adriatic, Serbia had, in the winter of 1912-13, pushed a force across the mountains to Durazzo ; and, though she withdrew in the face of the decision of the Powers, she still retained some portions of Albanian territory. Austria, only too anxious to pick a quarrel, sent an ultimatum to Belgrade (October 20th), demanding complete retirement ; and Serbia gave way. Even after this, Austria appears to have persisted in her efforts to procure a modification of the Treaty of Bucarest in favour of Bulgaria by force of arms ; and it is understood that only the distinct refusal of Germany to support her in this attempt induced her, for the time being, to desist.

The best chance for intervention had in fact been lost. A slight movement on Austria's part, at the outset of the second Balkan War, would have turned the scales in favour of Bulgaria, or might have prevented Rumania from joining the Allies ; but either Austria was not ready, or, as seems more likely, she failed to foresee the results of the second war, as there is no doubt the German Powers miscalculated the results of the earlier conflict. In any case, once the Treaty of Bucarest was signed, it seemed to Germany that a pretext was needed before it could be overthrown. Moreover, the increase in the German army had not yet had time to take effect ; and the widening of the Kiel Canal was not complete.

But we know from the report of M. Jules Cambon to his Government (November, 1913) that the German Emperor had by this time ceased to be in favour of peace ; and, after what has gone before, we need not be surprised. All efforts to break up the Entente

—in 1905-6, in 1908-9, and finally in 1911—had failed ; Germany was still “ encircled,” as its people professed to think ; and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, on whose cohesion the *Drang nach Osten* depended, was threatened with disruption by the victorious Serbs. Hence the conversion of the Emperor and the triumph of the military party at Berlin. The fact was not likely to escape that shrewd observer, the French Ambassador ; and his statement is borne out by the fact that, according to Rohrbach and other authors, the Emperor sent an ultimatum to Petrograd that same year. It was at a moment when Russia seemed to be contemplating intervention in Armenia ; and an obvious threat was contained in the intimation from Berlin that any movement in that direction would endanger European peace. Russia, feeling that the object was not worth a war in which she might not have had the support of other Powers, desisted ; but the incident is none the less significant. The danger passed, but in 1914 all was ready ; and the occasion of rupture was found in the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his wife at Serajevo on June 28th, 1914.

The attention of this country and, it may be added, of its rulers (as their attitude during the Conference of London showed) has been so concentrated on the growth of the German fleet and (at intervals) on the action of Germany with regard to Morocco, that they have failed to observe what has been, for the last fifteen years or more, the fundamental aim of German policy. A study of Austro-German behaviour

in regard to the Balkans and of the possibilities open to German ambitions, combined with an examination of the German mind as displayed in a long series of political writings, points, in my opinion, to the conclusion that the domination of the Nearer and Middle East was the essential object of their diplomacy and their gigantic military preparations. I do not mean that the statesmen of Berlin aimed at nothing else—far from it. The eventual absorption of Holland and Belgium, with German-speaking Switzerland and other countries or parts of countries; the conquest of the French, Dutch, and Belgian colonies; the diminution of France and Russia, not to speak of the destruction of British sea-power and the overthrow of the British Empire—all these came within their purview as ultimate objects. But what seemed attainable within a calculable time was the mastery of the Ottoman Empire and the lands that lie between it and the frontier of Austria-Hungary; and at this they have consistently aimed. Acquisitions in Morocco might come in by the way; the attitude of Germany in the episodes of Algeciras and Agadir shows that they were only secondary. In regard to the Balkans and the Turkish Empire they were repeatedly ready, if need were, to go to war.

Once masters in those territories, the German Powers would obtain what they wanted for their economic growth, throw open a vast region to German enterprise and capital, exclude Russia from the Mediterranean, and menace their chief rival, Great Britain, in the most vulnerable portions of her empire. Russia would undoubtedly resist, and would be

aided by France ; but, for all the talk (for home consumption) of the Russian bugbear, Berlin was not afraid of France and Russia combined ; and England might be—and to a large extent was—lulled into security. The pacific attitude of the British Government during the Conference of London, and its persistent efforts to arrive at an understanding with Germany, had doubtless fostered this belief ; and capable German publicists, writing just before the war, congratulated themselves on the agreement with Great Britain respecting the Bagdad railway and German progress in Central Africa, which it is understood was on the point of being signed in the summer of 1914.

It may appear presumptuous, especially at this early stage, to offer an explanation of the world-shaking events which we are now witnessing, and to attempt an exposure of Germany's secret plans. But a survey of preceding incidents and the development of German ideas convinces me that the attack on France and Russia was but a preliminary step, masking the real aim. This could not be attained without the overthrow of those Powers, but such a victory would be, after all, only a means to an end. The frontiers on either hand once secured, the forces of Germany—military, economical, and financial—could, without let or hindrance, flood the Nearer and Middle East. From this point of vantage, with enormously increased resources and heightened prestige, the final challenge might safely be issued to Great Britain for the empire of the world.

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